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GLIMPSES OF THE MONASTERY :

A

BRIEF SKETCH

OF THE

HISTORY OF THE URSULINES

OF

QUEBEC

FROM 1672 TO 17³~~8~~9.

PART II.

A. M. P. G.

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GLIMPSES OF THE MONASTERY.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

1672-1682.

THE MONASTERY AGAIN.

The Venerable Mother, whose labors had extended over the thirty-three first years of the Ursuline Monastery, had disappeared from the midst of her beloved family, and her death had left a void that could not be filled.

But the beneficent influence of her admirable life remained : her dying blessing, with the rich inheritance of her zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, rested there ; and her spirit still dwelt with those whom Providence had

assembled to continue the work she had commenced.

Who were those favored souls, chosen to perpetuate the spirit and the labors of the Venerable Mother Mary of the Incarnation ?

What are the vicissitudes which the Monastery was destined to witness in subsequent years ?

To answer these questions, we shall again open, in favor of Our Readers, that old Record of by-gone days, the monastic Annals.

There we find recounted the triumphs of Divine Grace in the call to a religious life, and in the faithful correspondence of the soul to her sublime vocation : there are detailed the simple, yet heartfelt joys of the cloister ;—with its toils, its providential trials and occasional sufferings ; its pious enterprises ; and other incidents that vary the even flow of the stream of time within the protecting walls of the Monastery. There we may perceive, at all times, a deep under-current of peace,

the sure indication of detachment from earth, and of hopes fixed on things above.

Our first inquiry will be of the statistics of the Community, which we are about to revisit; taking our date three years after the death of the Venerable Mother, 1675:—just two centuries ago.

Twenty-five professed nuns compose the cloistered family, the Superioress being Rev. Mother Margaret de Flecelles of St. Athanasius.

Two new members have just entered:—Miss de Lauson, daughter of the Seneschal de Lauson, and grand-daughter of the ancient Governor of New France of that name; the other young person, from the *Cote de Beaupré*, is Miss Marie Madeleine Gravel, who in the humble condition of lay-Sister, renders great services to her community during forty-eight years,

¹ The dowry of Mlle Angélique de Lauson du St. Esprit, and her sister Marie-Madeleine de St. Charles, already professed, gave the Monastery a title to the small *franc alleu noble* of Lauson.

and dying "in the fervor of her first consecration to God," merits a complete ulogium.

Up to this date (1675) only four deaths had occurred in the Monastery since 1639; a period of thirty-six years.

Passing over two winters more, we place ourselves at a hallowed anniversary, the 30th April. It is the fifth recurrence of the day since a death, "precious in the sight of the Lord" has rendered it memorable; and, far from being invested with gloom, there is a joyous ceremony prepared for the occasion. A young maiden is about to enroll herself under the banner of St. Ursula, exchanging all the pleasures and advantages which the world could offer her, for the title of Spouse of Christ. She will receive, moreover, a name that is also an inheritance, and Miss Marie-Catherine Pinguet, will henceforth be known as Mother Mary Catherine of the Incarnation.

Two other young ladies are clothed with the dark robe and white veil of an

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Ursuline novice, before the close of the year: the names which they will bear in the Community, the one fifty-five and the other seventy years, are Mother Marie-Madeleine Amiot of the Conception, and Mother Marie-Anne Anceau of St. Teresa. We shall have occasion to mention, elsewhere, these three worthy Mothers, all of whom will be found among the Superiors of the Monastery.

Passing to the department of the Institute, we find there the usual joyous groups of young French girls, pursuing the pleasant paths of science, proportioned to the times, to their years, and condition. There were also a sufficient number of little Indian girls to form a class, and these were not cared for with less tenderness than those, nor with less fruit for their souls.

It was the time when the politic Governor, Count de Frontenac, seeking to strengthen the influence of the French over the restless Iroquois, had conceived the plan of adopting the daughters of

their chiefs—after their own fashion—and placing them in the Convent to be instructed. Each time he made the journey to and from Cataraqui, (Kingston) some of these dark-eyed little girls of the forest, were sure to be in his company. The missionaries also among the Algonquins, the Abenakis, the Hurons at Lorette, would send the most intelligent of their young female neophytes, knowing the immense benefit it was for the whole tribe, to have among them one of these pious *seminarists*, so well instructed in her religion.

Fragments of old lists that have escaped destruction, are yet inscribed with the names of some of this little class of forest-girls of 1682, 3. Thus:—

“On the 15th of July 1682, Marie Durand, left the Seminary (the Indian class is thus designated by our Mothers) after being furnished with board and clothing during the year.”

“Little Barbe, of the Mohawk tribe, who had been in the Seminary six years, has returned to her parents at Old Lorette.”

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Here are other names, at the same date, 1683: "Théodosie, Denise (Abenakis);"—"Genevieve, Charlotte, Anne-Therese, Agnes Weskwes (Abenakis)." Evidently, the children of the forest are no longer numerous at the Convent, as they were in the earlier times.

Let us make a longer pause at 1682.

It is the first of June, and we find the Community disposed to elect a Superioress; their House of Assembly on these occasions being no other than the Chapel where they have first consecrated their lives to the service of God; their preparatory consultation, a three days' Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, special prayers, and finally the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and Communion.

Our readers have seen the much esteemed Mother St. Athanasius, and Ven. Mother Mary of the Incarnation, during thirty six years, called alternately to the rank of Superioress, by the united voice of their Sisters. Each had held as from the hand of God, that office of trust and res-

possibility, which gives its possessor only a larger share of labor and solicitude for the common weal; while the title, Rev. Mother or more simply, "Our Mother," reminds her, at each moment, of the spirit in which she is to wield the sceptre of authority. Neither had ever forgotten the words of St. Augustine, admonishing the Superioress to remember, that "if she precedes her Sisters in honor before the world, yet before God she is bound to place herself humbly at their feet, rendering herself of good example to all, and esteeming herself happy, not in the right she has to command, but in the facility her position affords her to serve and succor her sisters in a spirit of charity."

The code of legislation adopted by the order of St. Ursula, provides further for the welfare of all its members, by limiting the term of the offices that entail the greatest amount of fatigue and responsibility, to a term of three years,—subject to be prolonged by a re-election to six years, and not more, without an interval of repose.

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Nor is the direction of the little Commonwealth, left to the simple will of the Superioress, however excellent may be her qualifications. She has her "Constitutions," to which she must conform in the acts of her government; she has also her coadjutors, who share, in the various departments of the Monastery, the burden of authority: this is the "Privy Council," while the "Legislature" comprises the whole community of Choir sisters, after a certain number of years of profession.

But while we have discussed the form of government, our nuns have had other preoccupations. They have discovered that Rev. Mother St. Athanasius, obeying the impulse of her great humility, has provided herself with the right to decline the rank to which they were so desirous to raise her, for the seventh time. The permission has been given, and the Bishop refuses to retract it. Grieved, but submissive to the decision of their ecclesiastical Superior, they proceed to their election. Another of the French nuns who had joined the Ursulines of Quebec,

in 1671, Rev. Mother Marie Drouet—of Jesus, is called to succeed Rev. Mother Gibault du Breuil,—of St. Joseph, who had governed the Monastery for the last six years.

These two, with the Rev. Mother Le Maire—of the Angels, will guide the bark of St. Ursula till the close of the century, in the same spirit as their predecessors, a spirit of meekness and charity.

Thus, during sixty years and more, the Community of Quebec had the advantage of being governed by Superiors who had imbibed the true principles of religious observance, in the full and fervent Convents of the Order in France. These had been founded at the beginning of the 17th century, by the daughters of St. Angela, under circumstances most favorable to the true spirit of her Institute.

The two Congregations of Paris and Bordeaux gave rise, directly or indirectly, before the close of the century, to about 200 Monasteries: both had contributed to found the Ursulines of Quebec, the first of the Order in the New World.

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Eventually, five nuns of the Congrega-
tion of Tours (or Bordeaux) and seven of
Paris,—including two lay-sisters,—gave
their services to the foundation of this Mo-
nastery. Six were yet living at the date
with which this chapter closes; their
names will appear, more than once, in
the following pages.

CHAPTER II.

1686.

A MEMORABLE DATE.

The dimensions of the Monastery as
rebuilt by Mother Mary of the Incarna-
tion, with its adjoining Church and Choir,
had sufficed for some thirty years; but the
number of pupils augmenting with the
population of the country, it was resolved,

in the spring of 1686, to build a separate department for the nuns, in order to appropriate the greater part of the main-building to the use of the Boarders.

Accordingly, on the 22nd of June, the ceremony of laying the first—stone took place in this wise:—"At one o'clock in the afternoon, the Community being assembled around the foundations, with the pupils, all knelt to sing an anthem, in honor of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Then a little Indian girl, named Marie-Rose, dressed in white and representing the Infant Jesus, laid the first stone, upon which had been placed a medal of the Holy Family, as a perpetual memorial that this building was in honor of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and under their powerful protection."

Little Marie-Rose reminds us of another Indian girl for whom another ceremony took place that same year. Let us see what religion could do for a child of the forest:—it is a brief and simple tale, and soon there will be no more to tell, for the Seminarists are fast disap-

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Little Agnes Weskwas belonged to the
tribe of the Abenakis, and to the mission
of Becancour.¹ The good missionary, Rev.
Father Bigot, S. J. had first sent the little
girl to the Convent to be instructed for
her first communion, at the age of ten or
eleven. Agnes was gentle and attentive
to the lessons of her devoted teachers:
that great action which influences the
whole life of a Christian, made a strong
impression upon her, and when she re-
turned to her parents it was to edify them
by her piety, and to impart to others the
holy teachings she had received.

But, strange to say, the forest had lost
its charms for her; the rude, plays of her
young companions could no longer amuse
her, as they moved in cadence to their
own wild melodies. The fur-robe adorned
with embroidery; the moccasins, bright
with beads, with which the tender mo-
ther sought to win her little daughter

¹ Opposite Three Rivers.

were of no avail to make her forget the Convent. She was often seen in the direction of the cabin which served as a Chapel; for she went there to pray; hoping also to meet the good missionary, who surely would take her back some day to "the House of Jesus," and to the dear Mothers who had taught her to love and obey the Great Spirit.

Her importunities were at length effectual,—an Indian mother cannot refuse the request of her child; and doubtless the Black-robe secretly rejoiced to find one Genoveva among his flock.

In the early spring of 1686, the little forest-maiden was again admitted within the cloister; again she knelt in the quiet Chapel where she had first received the Bread of Life. Did she, as she approached again the holy Altar on the feast of the Annunciation, confide some important secret to her Heavenly Mother? Did she petition never more to leave her Convent-home?

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later, the wild flower drooped, as if it felt the rays of the hottest sun. A mortal sickness had seized the gentle child; and truly it was an edifying spectacle for the nuns to witness with what patience, —grateful for their least attentions, murmuring words of prayer,—she could suffer. Soon the danger becoming apparent, the last rites of the Church brought further strength for the supreme moment, and the little Indian girl, on the 5th of April, breathed forth in peace her pure young soul into the hands of Him who gave it.

A canoe from the Indian settlement of Becancour was already on its way to Quebec; for a messenger had been sent to warn the parents that their Agnes was dangerously ill. When they reached the Convent, they found her pallid bier, strewn with flowers, awaiting them in the Church.

Around it knelt many of her companions, watching with the dead, and praying for the repose of her soul. The peaceful and touching sight, joined to the recital of

her happy end, which the nuns, with consoling words, gave the afflicted parents, moderated their grief.

On the following day, the Service was sung with solemnity, in that Church, so different from the Chapel of the Mission; the voices of the nuns and the pupils mingled in the burial strains, full of anticipation of the joys of Paradise; and the procession went forth. It was composed of the clergy from the parish Church, a goodly number of citizens, as well as all the Indians in or around Quebec, and closed with that virginal bier, borne by the young students of the College; four of our "Seminarists", in white dresses and floating veils, upheld the corners of the muslin pall, while the other little Indian girls attired in a similar manner, formed another group preceding the mourners. When the parents and friends of the youthful Agnes, witnessed such honors rendered to the mortal remains of one of their nation, it no doubt tended much to console them, as well as to give them a high idea of that Faith which

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For our part, assisting in spirit at this touching ceremony, we have involuntarily brought to mind the image of Madame de la Peltrie, and all her love for the poor children of the forest, for whose salvation she would have willingly given her life:—and it has seemed to us fitting that the last Requiem Mass, sung in that Church where the pious Lady reposed, should be for the soul of an Indian maid.

The catastrophe which we have announced as A MEMORABLE DATE was now impending.

The summer season quickly passes, and October comes. The month brings one of those days, which, in a community, resemble a family-gathering: it is the Feast of St. Ursula, Patroness of the Order. On these occasions, the Divine Office is chanted with the rites of First-Class; High Mass is celebrated with solemnity; the whole Church is brilliantly adorned, and

the Altar glows with lights and flowers. The consecrated Virgins who follow the banner of the far-famed Princess of Albion, are filled with rejoicing, as they contemplate that heavenly kingdom, where they too hope one day to follow the Lamb, and sing that canticle, unknown to all the other inhabitants of the Celestial Jerusalem.

But thoughts far different from these are suggested by the date of the Vigil of that festival, in 1686.

It was a Sunday, and as such the day formed a part of the approaching solemnity, doubling its splendor and its privileges.

Let us, for a moment, picture the aspect of the Monastery on that memorable 20th October. It was not, then, the "Old Monastery," but young and fresh, peacefully sheltering its happy inmates. The previous week, in that early autumn, had realized the warmth and loveliness of the Indian Summer. Not a tree in that wide-stretching landscape, had yet lost the

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wealth of its many-colored, and bright-tinted foliage. Embosomed in the trees of the original forest, the Monastery stood, like a country-residence; the sombre hues of its grey stone walls, contrasting agreeably with the bright green of the still verdant lawn in front, and the rich hues of its surroundings.

To the left, the pretty Church with its heavenward-pointing spire, gave a finish to the picture; while to the right, the rising walls of the new building, announced the enterprise and growing prosperity of the establishment.

Within the Choir were assembled, on this early Sunday morning, the entire population of the Monastery: the nuns were there, kneeling in their stalls; young girls, from the age of six to sixteen; swarthy faces that denote the forest children of Canada, filled the lower extremity of the choir; while, beyond the grating, not a few pious worshippers offered their prayers in that quiet Church, rich in gilding and tasteful architecture, where

the spirit of Madame de la Peltrie and the Venerable Marie de l'Incarnation seemed still to dwell.

Mass was nearly over: the nuns, in their long mantles, had lowered their veils over their faces, as they retired from the Holy Table ;—it was that blissful moment, the “Thanksgiving” after Communion, when each in peace and trust, is wont to renew that total sacrifice of herself, implied in her sacred vows.

Suddenly, a confused sound of human voices, and the clangor of the parlor bell, rung as by an impatient hand, startled the peaceful congregation. Mother Superior quits her place to answer the unwonted summons, the import of which, in one moment, was but too evident.

Her rapid footsteps bear her quickly through the smoke that already filled the passages, to the extremity of the main building where a fire had been lit, in the huge kitchen-chimney of those olden times.—O terror! the whole apartment was wrapped in flames!

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Promptly closing the door through which the smoke was densely pouring, she hurries back to the Chapel, and, in a voice of distress, cries out: "All is lost! The whole house is in flames: get to a place of safety as quickly as possible."

That sad voice was all that broke the silence of the sacred fane. The order was obeyed with one impulse. The pupils, followed by the nuns, issued from the nearest door into the court-yard, while the smoke and the seething flames, bursting from doors and windows, left no doubt as to the urgency of this precipitate flight. The citizens who had given the first alarm, were soon joined, with shouts and lamentations, by all the population of the city. But, with the fire, a strong wind from the north had arisen; and the dry pine-floors and partitions, bore swiftly forward the destroying element through the entire length of the main-building towards the Chapel and Church. Seeing the certain ruin that threatened the whole establishment, all efforts were now directed towards saving, at least, the vestments,

the sacred relics, and the furniture of the altars. These were in part secured, with the business papers of the Community. And yet, at what risks ! The heroic lay-Sister, who was transporting the rich reliquaries, persisted, after every one else had fled from the danger, till, on a sudden she perceives that the flames have left her no other egress but through the attic over the Church. She speeds her way, laden with her precious burden, and is saved from her perilous situation, by being helped down through the windows in the roof ! ¹ It was enough that no life was lost, although every thing else perished. All the movables, including the Annals of the Convent, valuable books, objects of piety or of usefulness, that were almost sacred from having belonged to the Venerable first Foundress or her companions ; all the stores and provisions ; the furniture

¹ This brave Sister, whose name was Sr. Marie Montmesnil de Ste. Cecile, was a native of Normandy. She lived fifty-four years after the narrow escape of perishing by fire, related above : she was aged 81, at her decease, in 1740.

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all were destroyed there, as at the first
burning of the Convent, in the space of
a few hours. The new building, consisting
yet of unfinished walls, underwent the
fate of the rest, though with less damage.
The out-houses were included in the
destruction, with the exception of two
small buildings, the bake-house and
wash-house: even these had to be un-
roofed, in order to preserve them. One
small building, at the distance of some
sixty yards, stood entire; it was the house
of refuge, left by Madame de la Peltrie,
which, thirty-six years before, had shel-
tered the Community in similar circum-
stances.

But who can well imagine the scene
when the flames, having obtained com-
plete mastery, drove all the spectators to
a distance, and revelled there with all the
fury of short-lived triumph. The roof of
the main building, with its cross-sur-
mounted cupola, had sunk, while the
tossing flames rose higher and brighter;
but it was on the Church that all eyes

were riveted. Its wide arched windows glowed with the furnace heat within; when suddenly the spire was enveloped, as with a fiery shroud; another torrent ran from point to point along the pine beams of the groaning roof, till the whole gave way at a moment, with a tremendous crash; and there remained one glowing heap of ruins, where an hour before had knelt devout worshippers in peaceful adoration!

Among the spectators of this fearful scene, we find three aged nuns, who at the dead of a winter's night, thirty-six years before, had witnessed the destruction of the first Convent, raised on that same spot:— Venerable Mother St. Athanasius, now seventy-three years of age, Mother St. Croix, almost four-score, and Mother St. Ignatia, nearly seventy:—these knew by sad experience what it was to be driven from their Convent-Home by fire.

And how dear must those halls, those cells, that choir, the class-rooms,— the

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very floors where the Venerable Mother Mary of the Incarnation had trod, have been to all these her beloved Mothers and sisters, most of whom had lived there many years under her maternal care. It was like so many relics doomed to destruction. But grace was not less powerful on this occasion than on the former. They “who forsake parents, or brothers and sisters, houses or lands,” to follow their Lord, should be careful not to suffer their hearts to be captivated by any thing earthly; so, when the flames had made a holocaust of the fruit of forty years’ economy, there was neither lamentation nor discouragement.

At eight o’clock, on that Sunday morning, the nuns, kneeling in their pious Chapel, had heard the signal of alarm; at one, neither Chapel nor Convent remained to shelter them or their pupils: yet hear what they have themselves testified of their feelings in these trying circumstances:—

“This calamity, although severe and unforeseen, hardly moved us, Divine

grace having so taken possession of our hearts at that moment, when God had given himself to us in his Sacrament of love, that it was not possible for us to regret the loss of earthly goods."

Here, pity must give place to admiration;—such sentiments tell how fully the Community had imbibed the spirit of its Saintly Foundress, or rather that they too were saints: none else could be capable of such detachment!

CHAPTER III.

1687-1689.

RESTORATION OF THE MONASTERY.

In the mean time, measures were taken to shelter the homeless Ursulines. It had been, at once, decided that eight would remain to guard the beloved site, and to

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After High Mass at the Cathedral was
over, about half past twelve, the Bishop
Saint-Valier, and their Superior, Rev.
Father Beschefer, S. J., came to escort
the others to the Hotel-Dieu, where
they were received with the utmost cor-
diality. Entering by the Hospital, they
requested to be conducted to the Chapel,
where, on bended knees, they intoned
the "Laudate," to thank God for having
accomplished his holy will in them, by
depriving them of every thing; then they
sang the "Memorare," to the Blessed
Virgin, their Mother and principal Supe-
rioress, to beg her assistance and protection:
finally, before accepting any further rites
of hospitality, they assisted at the Holy
Sacrifice, offered for them by Rev. Father
Beschefer, who had kindly deferred
saying his mass till that hour "in order
to console them more effectually."—Happy
souls! to whom the consolations of Heaven

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In fact, the courage of our Ursulines seems never to have faltered an instant.

Their income, during half a century, would not have sufficed to enable them to rebuild their Monastery ; yet, trusting in the assistance of Divine Providence, they resolved to attempt its reconstruction ; and until that was accomplished, to live there amidst its ruins. The generosity of friends, on every side, enabled them to effect the first of these purposes : their own generosity in suffering, carried them through the second.

Let us group a few of the incidents that have been handed down to us of that period, during which our Mothers had to contend with the accumulated difficulties of poverty, sickness, and destitution.

A part of the Community, as we have seen, had sung their perfect act of resignation at the Chapel of the Hotel Dieu, where they had found hospitality, after

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that disastrous Sunday morning. Their kind hostesses did not forget that the following day was the feast of St. Ursula; and made immediate preparations to have High Mass, Vespers, Sermon, and Benediction, in favor of their guests. The Sermon proved to be a moving exhortation from the Bishop Saint-Valier, who after celebrating Mass for the Ursulines and giving them Holy Communion, sought, as he said, to console himself, while condoling with them; and who seemed, indeed, more affected by the sad accident than they were. After such a proof of the delicate sentiments of the good *Hospitalières*, we are not surprised that the two Communities lived like one, reciting their office, taking recreation, their meals, and serving the poor invalids, together.

Some may not be prepared to hear that the Ursulines were also seen at the Castle of St. Louis. It was deemed proper that the Mother Superior, with some of her Sisters, should pay her respects to the Marchioness de Denonville. Their conductors on the occasion were Madame de

Villeray, and Madame Bourdon. It is hardly necessary to say that they were received at the Governor's with all the kindness and cordiality imaginable. Taking leave of their friends, the Marquis de Denonville and the Marchioness, about five o'clock, they proceeded to the Palace of the Intendant. Here, they were not less cordially welcomed than at the castle; but they had yet another call to make. Bidding adieu to Madame Champagne, they followed the streets back to their *home*; and, alighting from their carriage, they went in to wish a "Good Evening" to their sisters, the eight who had been left in possession of the house of Madame de la Peltrie. When they, at last, entered the Hotel-Dieu at six o'clock, "the peace of the cloister seemed delightful, after such a day of fatigue and dissipation!"

On the 7th of November, the *Convent* of the Ursulines, as the house of Madame de la Peltrie was now styled, was in readiness, and the exiles prepared to return. The charitable importunities of their

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kind hostesses, were unavailing to retain them longer ; so, amid good wishes on the one side, and sincere protestations of lasting gratitude on the other, the adieus, not without tears, were made. Three of the good Hospital nuns were authorized to accompany the Ursulines, and visit with them the other religious Institutions of the city. The walk, thus extended, took them first to the Seminary, where the illustrious Bishop Laval, lived with his Community of Priests and Levites, in the poverty, fervor, and simplicity of the Apostolic times. Thence, they passed to the gardens, and to the Little Seminary, where the students obtained a holiday in their honor. The Cathedral came next; then the College of the Jesuits; finally, entering the Chapel of the Congregation, they sang an anthem to the Blessed Virgin, and continued their way, always conducted by the Bishop; their Superior, M. de Mai-zerets (of the Seminary), and Rev. Father Beschefer.

The procession had lengthened, with

the road, till it resembled a triumphal march. The door of their little Convent, at last, opened before them, and the crowd disappeared, as the nuns entered the narrow apartments provided for their reception. The walls had not grown wider, and if partitions had separated the lower story into a kitchen and a refectory, the other, above, retained its full dimensions, (thirty feet by twenty,) in order to accommodate twenty-eight persons with a dormitory.

A little Chapel and choir had been fashioned, not in the style of the Renaissance, but in that of the grotto of the *Naissance* in Bethlehem,—it was a small building, which had formerly served as a stable. This, with the other “improvements” around, seemed to move the company more to compassion than to admiration. “My good Sisters, I see every thing prepared here to make you suffer,” remarked the kind-hearted Bishop: “But for our part, says the Annalist, our joy was apparent to all, so delighted

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were we to find ourselves again reunited."
"*Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum ha-
bitare fratres in unum.*" — Yes! it is a
good and pleasant thing for brethren or
sisters to dwell together in unity.

If adversity is the hour to know one's
friends, our Mothers had reason to congratu-
late themselves on the number, the liber-
ality, and devotedness of theirs. While the
smoke was yet rising from the ruins of
the Monastery, the Bishop had addressed
himself in their behalf, to the faithful,
assembled in the Cathedral for High
Mass. Soon after, he issued a Circular,
informing the clergy throughout the dio-
cese of the accident, which, he said, in-
terested the whole country and was of
itself sufficient to excite their parishioners,
through gratitude and affection, to render
all the assistance in their power towards
repairing the disaster.

For his part, he contributes, at once,
three thousand francs; and, during his
absence in France, he pleads the cause
of his afflicted daughters so efficaciously,

that the Annals name him ¹ as their chief benefactor in the reëstablishment of their Monastery. The Marquis de Denonville's first offering, is a thousand francs ; while the Marchioness makes it her duty to go from door to door through the city, collecting for her dear Ursulines, to whom she bears daily, with her sympathy, the fruit of her charity.

The Rev. Fathers of the Society of Jesus, after their first offering of a thousand francs, furnish for five or six times that value in goods and provisions. The members of the Seminary, and the Intendant, contribute with equal generosity. The citizens of Quebec, the principal families throughout the country, give according to their means ; the Ursulines of Paris, and the other Houses of the Order, the relatives of the nuns there especially the family Le Maire, and the Flecelles, again, on this occasion, as

¹ The Bishop embarked in October, having just concluded the episcopal visit of his diocese, Canada and Acadia.

as their chief support, send liberal sums to the poor Ursulines in Canada.

The winter passed away in providing the most needful articles of clothing, and in plying diligently the needle, in such dainty embroidery as would bring, by its sale, some profits to lessen the necessity for daily alms.

Early in spring, the labors of rebuilding were commenced, under the skilful direction of Rev. Father F. Rafaix S. J. while the nuns invited to their humble Chapel, the little girls of the city for the Instructions of the First Communion. As soon as the snow commenced to disappear, they made preparations for opening classes for day-pupils, by putting up a sort of shed, near the spot where lately stood that precious memorial of the past, the "Old Ash Tree." ¹ This was no sooner

¹ That venerable relic of the primitive forest was still a magnificent tree at the 200th anniversary of the Foundation of the Convent (1839). It lost one of its principal branches a few years later, and, finally, in the month of August, 1868, was laid prostrate by a storm.

in readiness than fifty or sixty pupils assembled, and the Ursulines found labor congenial to their profession.

But, as the adage tells: "Misfortunes never come single." If already the heat of summer rendered their narrow lodgings most uncomfortable, what would it be in sickness? A contagious malady (the measles) was raging in the city. After attacking the scholars, it fell upon the teachers, and it was necessary to have an Infirmary. A small building, serving as a wash-house, was forthwith accommodated for this purpose; and thither the sick were removed and attended, till nearly the whole community had paid tribute to the unwelcome visitor.

The month of September brought with it the mortal illness of the venerable Mother Cecile de la Croix, now seventy-eight years of age. Her vigorous constitution had enabled her to bear a large share of the hardships of the foundation, in the early times, and to continue her services forty-eight years, edifying the

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Community by her humility, her charity, and her fidelity to all the observances of religious life. The offices that she regarded with dread, were those of Assistant and Mistress of Novices to which she was called more than once, and for which she was well qualified, in every one's opinion but her own. She loved far better, to be employed at the Externs : the poorest scholars were her delight. " In short, says the Annalist, she was a true Ursuline."

The ardors of a burning fever consumed the little remains of her strength, while during three weeks she was attended in that miserable hovel, with love and immense compassion. It is the survivors we most pity, when for the bier of their beloved Mother, they could find no better place than the porch of that poor little Chapel ; no more convenient spot for her grave than the ruins of their former lovely Choir ! To add to the sadness of the burial ceremony, a heavy autumnal rain came pouring its waters over the funeral cortege, as they bore the dear remains across

the open court to the last resting place of the dead. . . .

The generous resignation with which the nuns had accepted the affliction sent them in the burning of their Monastery, seems to have extended its soothing influence to this whole period of privation and suffering.

“During this year, says the Annalist, in order to second the designs of Divine Providence over us, each one strove to advance in virtue by the practices of mortification and penance. Daily prayers and thanksgivings were offered to God for the succor and aid he sent us, as well as to implore his protection for our benefactors. Among other prayers, the Litanies of the Saints were recited every day, with the suffrages, as marked for the Rogation days. The anniversary of the conflagration, the 20th October, was a day of special devotion and fervor. In the morning there was general communion; in the afternoon we went around the ruins in Procession, singing the Litany of the Blessed Virgin,

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our Mother and Protectress. Our hopes have not been confounded, for our Good Mother has so watched over us that even in our greatest distress, we have never been reduced to want for the necessities of life."

Meanwhile the busy scene presented by the heroes of the trowel, the plane, and the hammer, at their respective stations, gave hopes of better days. In November, the new wing, ¹ finished as to the exterior, offered, at least, one large Hall complete, and ready to be occupied. This was at once devoted to the use of the pupils, the Annals marking with characteristic precision, that "twelve months and nineteen days after their accident, they were enabled to admit Boarders again."

During the winter, the workmen con-

¹ This wing, 60 French feet by 25, was destined as a habitation for the nuns; the pupils occupied the "large Hall" only till the next spring (May), when they removed to the apartments, which the nuns then quitted, in the house of Mde. de la Peltrie.

tinued their labors in the interior of the building, with such success that on the 18th of May (1688), the house was solemnly blessed, and dedicated to the Holy Family: on the following day, the nuns were occupied in removing to their new apartments. It must have been a joyful exchange to them, especially to see the thirteen most aged among them provided with cells for their nightly rest, instead of a narrow space measured off by inches in a common dormitory.

The humble Chapel we have pointed out, after serving for Holy Mass and the Divine Office during eighteen months, after witnessing the profession of a fervent Novice, Miss Juschereau, the funeral of the venerable Mother St. Croix, the Renovation of the vows, the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament several times, was abandoned for the large Hall,¹ already

¹ This apartment, beneath the Community-Hall which served as a Chapel thirteen months, has become historical since its occupation by General Murray for the sessions of his Council, Military

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mentioned, in the lower story of the new wing.

The restoration of the main-building, which gave another Chapel with the apartments necessary for regular observance in the Community, a Refectory, an Infirmary, additional cells, &c., was accomplished in the course of the same year (1688.)

The ancient choir rebuilt as class-rooms for the boarders, in 1689,³ at last restored

and Private, in 1759. It had been occupied as a Laundry or clothes-room, until the present year, 1875.

³ "In rebuilding the choir, say the Annals, a part only of the ancient foundations served, the width having been enlarged six feet on the south, and the length also by several feet."

This building, as reconstructed in 1689, served as class-rooms, refectory, &c., for the Boarders until 1834, when new apartments having been provided for them, by an additional story the whole length of the main building (112 × 35) the old classes were occupied by the Half-Boarders. In 1874 this old building was demolished and replaced by another, augmented in dimensions and four stories high.

the house of Madame de la Peltrie to its ordinary destination, school-rooms for the Externs.

CHAPTER IV.

1689.

CLOSE OF THE FIRST HALF-CENTURY.

The events we have had to record thus far, have presented enough of "life's chequered scenes" to prove that this edifice, destined to be lasting, had for its firm foundation the sacred Wood of the Cross. The Monastery, newly restored after a second burning, again sheltered the cloistered family, who felt they had much to be thankful for in the past; much to hope from the protecting care of Providence, in the future. In their recent

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misfortune, they had experienced prompt and generous sympathy; all classes of society rejoiced to see the Convent not only rebuilt, but enlarged.¹ The Church, alone, had not risen from its ruins.

The date of this restoration, moreover, coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the arrival of the first Ursulines in Canada.

The Community numbered, now, thirty-four members;—ten others, including the three Foundresses, had, during that space of time, passed to their reward.

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No other year in those early times, seems to have been so fertile in vocations for the cloister, as 1689. Twice the touching ceremony of "taking the veil," was witnessed in the temporary chapel be-

¹ The wing, called "La Sainte-Famille, had been extended towards the south-west, forming an angle with the main-building 30 feet by 38 affording a kitchen and its dependencies, an infirmary, etc. The first stone was laid on the 19th July, 1687, by Made-moiselle de Denonville, then a boarder, daughter of the Governor of the Colony.

neath the present Community Hall. On both occasions, the Bishop Saint-Valier officiated, assisted by his clergy and some of the Rev. Fathers of the Society of Jesus. The Marquis de Denonville, the Intendant, and their suite, were also present,—the new “Brides of Jesus,” being Miss Elizabeth d’Ailleboust, and Miss Louise-Rose de Lanaudière ; henceforth known as Mother Marie de la Croix and Mother St. Catherine. After the ceremony, the company were further gratified by being allowed to visit the interior of the Monastery ;—those cells which, with their humble furniture, bare walls, and narrow door with wooden latch, still excite the curiosity, or *admiration* of the rare visitors permitted to behold them ; that Community-Hall, with its deep-channelled oaken wainscot, its plain benches around—instead of chairs ;—wearing yet much the same aspect as it did two hundred years ago ; the new refectory and Chapel,—of which we shall soon have further occasion to speak. So well did the company enjoy the treat, that it was almost six

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o'clock before the cloistered grounds, the park and gardens, had regained their wonted look of repose and quietude. The good nuns console themselves with the thought that their cloister will not long be thus infringed upon, their new Chapel—having an exterior part destined to the use of the public, being nearly in readiness for Divine Service.

Four other young ladies, in the fresh years of fifteen and sixteen, embalm the new Novitiate with the fragrance of their early sacrifice, before the close of that fiftieth year under consideration : these were Miss Marie-Anne Robineau¹ de

¹ Miss Robineau, of Bécancour, daughter of Baron René Robineau, officer of the Regiment of Turonne, Chevalier of the Order of St. Michel ; her mother belonged to the ancient and noble family Le-Neuf de la Pothérie.

Miss Gauthier de Comporté, daughter of P. Gauthier, Sieur de Comporté and Grand Prevost of Quebec ; her mother's family name was Basire. Her sister Marie-Anne de Comporté made profession five years later.

Miss Drouard, of Quebec, took the name of Mother

Becancour, Miss Marie Madeleine Gauthier de Comporté, Miss Marie-Madeleine Drouard and Jeanne Chorel.

On another page of our old Record mention is made of the Episcopal visit which terminates to the mutual satisfaction of the Prelate and his spiritual daughters ; its close is marked by conferring the Sacrament of Confirmation, upon a Postulante and about twenty of the Boarders, among whom are several little Indian girls. On the 23rd of June, the Holy Sacrifice was offered for the last time in the temporary Chapel under the Community, after which the Blessed Sacrament was borne, in ceremony, to the new Chapel at the other extremity of the Convent. The procession moved across the grounds through a winding avenue

St. Michel, at the age of fifteen, and lived to the age of eighty-two.

Miss Chorel de St. Romain was soon rejoined the Novitiate by her sister Marie-Françoise, who was the first to bear (1693) the name of Mother Marie Sacré Cœur.

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bordered with young fir-trees, and strewed with flowers. The nuns, bearing lighted tapers, led the way, followed by the boarders, in holiday attire; the Clergy preceded the Bishop, who bore with careful step, the sacred Ciborium; while the Hymn *Pange lingua*, and the Anthem, *O sacrum Convivium*, gave expression to the sentiments of piety and devotion which animated their hearts.

The first Mass celebrated in that little sanctuary, destined to witness during thirty-four years, the fervor, the rejoicings, the alarms, and the trials of the Ursulines, was on the feast of St. John Baptist, 1689.

Long since has that Chapel ceased to echo with religious chants; its sacred destination is but a picture of the fancy-evoking the records of the past;—let us turn, then, to other memorials of those early times, witnesses to the piety of our first nuns, which are still in good preservation.

Such of our readers as have ever made the Convent their abode, have not failed

to notice, these ancient statues to which we allude ; they are, apparently, the Guardians of the " House of Jesus."

It was the 7th December of that Jubilee-year, 1689, that installed the Image of the Immaculate Virgin within its sculptured and gilded niche, at the entrance of the Community-Hall. Another, of St. Joseph, was placed, with the same tender piety on the second landing of the great stairway in the centre of the building, known as " St. Augustine's stairs." The whole community walked in procession, singing Hymns, while the litter, covered with flowers, on which the statues were placed was borne to their respective stations. How many times, during the space of now nearly two centuries, has the sight of those statues been to the inhabitants of the cloister, the signal of a quick thought sent winged to heaven ; here by an *Angel*, there by a *Tota pulchra* as to the Virgin full of grace and beauty. And how can we recall the memory of our ancient Mothers, never too poor to find means to manifest their tender piety to

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wards God and his Saints, without being moved by a generous impulse to follow closely in their footsteps, emulating the holy examples they have left us!

Yet all was not bright and peaceful in that year, 1689. In the History of Canada, with all its pages of terror and warfare, there are none darker with anxiety. The country seemed indeed on the brink of a total ruin. The Iroquois, far from being weakened or disheartened by the long war they had waged against the French and the allied Indian Tribes, rose bolder and more aggressive after each encounter. The environs of Montreal were infested with straggling bands of the blood-thirsty foe. We shall not here revive the gloomy picture of the massacre of Lachine,¹ and the other feats of savage prow-

¹ In the year 1689, the Iroquois made a fearful onslaught upon the Island of Montreal with 1400 warriors. The night of the 4th of August was signalized by an attack upon the dwellings of the inhabitants and settlements on the borders of the Sault St. Louis, of whom several hundreds were ruthlessly killed and made captives. Shocking barbarities were

ess, which rendered the year too sadly memorable ; but opening that old parchment bound Volume, our guide in revisiting the scenes of by-gone days, let us see what record of passing events is there inscribed.

A few days after the event just alluded to has been recorded, the Annalist says :—

“ A terrifying report came in all haste that Three Rivers had been laid in blood and ashes by the Iroquois, who were ravaging all the country around. The news proved false, but a letter from the Governor, the Marquis de Denonville, received later, gave undoubted information that he had fifteen or sixteen hundred Iroquois to contend against ; whilst the other party, in company with two hundred English Colonists, were waiting to fall upon Three Rivers and the habitations. This news caused the

perpetrated on this occasion, which is known in Canadian history as the “ Massacre de Lachine.” In the brief space of one hour about 200 persons were cruelly butchered, and about the same number carried off to be subjected to captivity and torture. — *History of Can. by Dr. Miles, p. 202.*

so sadly in consternation at Quebec, there being
parchm two hundred and forty men in the
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us see what Major Prevost resolved to do all in
e inscribed his power to fortify the place. A fort was
ust alluded erected so near the Monastery that the
list says:—the parade passed through the court-yard
in all haste and garden. Sentinels were placed on
aid in blo g and at different stations in the city, and
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ter from the "Figure to yourself, continues the An-
nonville. nalist, a city without walls or gates, whose
information inhabitants have gone to defend another
en hundred place!"

; whilst But we have put our confidence in
th two H, who alone can deliver us from the
e waiting evil impending. For this reason we offer
d the our prayers incessantly to implore the
ed the g Divine protection. If God be for us,

is known we have nothing to fear; but if He forsake
Lachine." us, we are undone. This great tribulation
00 person excites every one to penitence. There are
me number daily processions and other acts of piety to
y and torture appease the wrath of God, irritated by
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the sins of his people. On the feast of St. Augustin, we commenced the following devotions, for the preservation of the country, the humiliation of the Iroquois and the general welfare of all classes of society.

1° A weekly Communion to be offered for these intentions.

2° The Anthem, *O salutaris*, sung at Mass after the Elevation, and the *Salve Regina*, after Matins.

3° Five of the Community, named each week, will pray specially for these intentions, as follows :—Two will say the office of the Immaculate Conception before the Blessed Sacrament ; two others the office of St. Joseph ; a lay-sister will say nine times the *Gloria Patri* and *Ave Maria*. All the other penitential acts and good works of the Community, will be offered for the same ends. 'These practices of piety are to be continued the whole year.'

Evidently, our nuns were not idle spectators, nor *speculators* on the state of public

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affairs. Like Moses on the Mount, they had recourse to prayer, while their brethren battled with the enemy;—we know that, of old, the victory depended more on the prayer of Moses, than on the valor of the Israelites.

The Ursulines, in fact, had need, not only of pious zeal, but of courage, also, for the enemy would not always be at a distance.

CHAPTER V.

1690.

THE ALARMS OF WAR.

When in the security of the present day, one surveys at leisure the magnificent panorama of the fertile and cultivated valley of the St. Lawrence, its scattered

cottages, hamlets, and villages, peacefully nestling along the borders of the primeval forests; its thriving towns, reposing fearless of an enemy; the old Citadel of Quebec dismantled, and its batteries at rest; it may not be an easy matter to bring to mind that far different picture it presented in by gone days.

The occasional apparition of an Indian in his characteristic costume, may recall to mind those times when the whole land was peopled with a brave but savage race, that have now almost totally disappeared; and we think of the terror the name of the Iroquois once inspired. The sight of the English flag reminds us also of a terrible crisis; and we contrast the present security and happiness of the country, with the former stern and fearful realities of war and bloodshed.

The Ursulines had their share in the consternation which the name of the Indian, and the *Englishman*, in turn, excited. That old volume of the *Annals* seems, even now, to palpitate with dread, in the

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recital it makes of the siege of Quebec, in 1699.

Our readers will follow with interest the events already known to them by history, but which take the coloring of actuality as our Annalist describes the scenes of which she was an eye witness.

“On the 7th October, she writes, news was received that an English fleet of thirty-four vessels was approaching to take possession of the country; already on the second of the month, the enemy was in sight at Malbaie.¹ This news created great alarm. Quebec could offer no resistance, there being no soldiers in the city, and but two hundred male citizens. The Governor with all the troops had gone to Montreal, to defend that place against the Iroquois. A canoe was despatched, immediately, to carry him the tidings of this new danger.”

“In the mean time, the Major Prevost worked at the fortifications, batteries were

¹ Now called Murray Bay.

mounted at the Lower Town ; the streets were barricaded ; the inhabitants of the environs were called upon to aid in the defence. There was a deliberation to send the two communities of nuns to Montreal ; but as no boats could be procured, it was decided we should go to Lorette. Four of us were to be sent to make preparations for the rest ; then, as soon as the enemy's sails should be in sight, the others were to follow. A place of concealment was contrived in the cellar, where we stowed away our linen, stuffs, &c. We commenced a novena to the Holy Angels, and to St. Joseph, the Patron of the country, having Mass said every day in his honor ;—omitting nothing to appease the Divine justice and to obtain the favor of God for the country."

" Our vows were accepted ; contrary winds were sent, so that in nine days the enemy's vessels did not advance as much as they might have done in half a day."

" When the fleet reached Quebec, which was on the morning of the 16th Oct., the

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city was prepared, having for its defence two thousand men, including the troops recalled from Montreal, under the Count de Frontenac; and the Canadian militia, under M. de Callières. The same day, the English captain sent a herald to summon the Governor to surrender. According to the insolent terms of the letter, not only the Fort, arms, munitions and stores, were to be delivered up, but all the inhabitants of the city were to surrender at discretion. One hour only was offered for deliberation. The Governor gave immediately the answer they *deserved* namely: 'That God would not favor those who were traitors to their King ¹ and their religion, and that he had no answer to give them, but by the mouth of his cannon.' The herald was dismissed without further ceremony and the next day the firing from the fleet commenced. On the 18th, a part of the English troops landing at Beauport, there was a skirmish between

¹ James II had been driven from his kingdom, and William III called in to take his place on the throne of England.

them and the French militia, with a loss for the enemy.

The following days the cannonade was renewed, but with less effect. On the first day, a cannon ball burst through a window-shutter and sash, and finally lodged at the bedside of one of our boarders; another passed through the apron of one of our Sisters, carrying off the piece; other balls fell in the garden, the parks and the court-yards; but, by the protection of Heaven, no person was injured. Our house was crowded with people, and the Externs (house of Mad. de la Peltrie) was filled with furniture and merchandise, placed there for greater security. The Boarders' department, the classes for the Indian girls, the refectory and novitiate, with our three cellars, were filled with the people of the city, women and children, so that we could hardly pass to and from our kitchen, but ate our food standing and in haste, like the Israelites when they ate the Paschal Lamb."

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Blessed Sacrament in prayer: the following nights, some took a little rest in the Sacristy, others in their cells, remaining dressed, awaiting death at any moment. We had placed in the Choir the statues of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, before which a taper was kept burning, while some of the sisters were constantly there in prayer. We lent, on this occasion, our painting of the Holy Family, to be exposed on the steeple of the Cathedral, to bear witness that it was under their holy patronage that we(?) were combating the enemy."

Having attempted, in vain, to take the city by assault on the side of the Little River, (the St. Charles) where they were vigorously repulsed by our Canadians, the enemy retreated to their damaged ships.

This was on the 21st of October."

The evil fortune of the invaders pursued them still, during their perilous navigation homeward. Several of their ships were lost, and hardships incredible, from want of food and the inclemency of the weather, attended the squadron to the

port of Boston, which they entered only six weeks after losing sight of Quebec.

"The retreat of the enemy left the country in great joy. The people sought to manifest their gratitude to Heaven, acknowledging they had no part in the victory, but that it was God's right hand that had delivered us. For this end, the Bishop of Quebec ordered a procession to be made, in thanksgiving. The image of the Blessed Virgin was borne successively to the four Churches, ending at the Cathedral, where the *Te Deum* was sung. In the evening there were bonfires (des feux de joie).

Moreover, our Prelate has decided that the Chapel which is to be built in the Lower Town, shall bear the title of "Our Lady of Victory," in fulfilment of a vow made to this effect. Every year, the fourth Sunday of October will be a commemorative feast; there will be a procession in honor of the Blessed Virgin on the same day.

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and fervor this anniversary is still celebrated. Happy the country that has marked its calendar by such festivals, which are kept after two centuries, in the spirit of their founders !

Not to interrupt her narration, our cloistered historian has delayed to another page, her record of the festival of St. Ursula. It is in keeping with the spirit of these primitive times. The city was besieged by an enemy, the roar of their cannons, at various hours of the day, was heard so near that the balls rattled upon the roof and walls of the monastery. The danger was so real that the Blessed Sacrament was removed from the Tabernacle,—nevertheless the Nuns sing their first Vespers. The Breviary Office cannot be recited, because their books, have been stowed away, with whatever else they held most precious ; but in order not to defraud Heaven of their accustomed tribute of prayer, they give an hour more to meditation. On the Festival, the Bishop is in their Chapel to say Mass and give them Communion. At two o'clock P. M. they

take their accustomed places in the choir to listen devoutly to a sermon, with the expectation that at four, a great battle would take place within sight of their windows. The sacred preacher (M. de la Colombière) after a panegyric of the Virgin martyrs, seizes the occasion to exhort his auditors to similar intrepidity in the approaching danger, congratulating them on the happiness of being called to follow so closely the footsteps of their illustrious Patroness. He concludes his exhortation in this pathetic style, when the Bishop entones that plaintive Hymn "*Maria Mater gratiæ.....Et mortis horæ suscipe,*" with such a voice that the good nuns were half persuaded that their last hour had come. It is easy to imagine with what sentiments they prostrated to receive the blessing of our Lord in the Benediction Service, at which the Prelate officiated, closing the festal solemnity just as the roar of artillery recommenced.

Later, it was known that this last cannonade of the enemy was but a feint to cover their retreat which they effected

with great precipitation during the night. When the report of this victory reached the court of France, the conduct of Frontenac and that of the officers and men under his command, were so highly appreciated, that the king ordered a medal to be struck in commemoration of the event.

Some of our Readers may have seen this medal: it bears the following motto:—

KEBECA LIBERATA M. DC. XC;—and on the other side:

FRANCIA IN NOVO ORBE VICTRIX.—
Quebec delivered, 1690. France victorious in the New World.

CHAPTER VI.

1695.

REV. MOTHER MARGARET DE FLECELLES OF
ST. ATHANASIUS,

SECOND SUPERIORESS OF THE MONASTERY :—PARISIAN NUNS.

Early in the history of the Monastery, we meet with the name of Mother St. Athanasius:—our Ven. Mother Mary of the Incarnation, her contemporary, has left us an appreciation of her merit, in terms of the highest eulogium.

Called to govern the Community during eighteen years, and to edify it by her virtues through her long career of more than half a century, her memory is still fresh among us, embalmed in that gratitude, esteem, and affection which, surrounded her during life.

In reading of the vocation of Mother

M. de l'Incarnation, we are strnck with the conviction that Divine Providence had prepared her in a special manner for her work ; that, truly, the trials and the toils of preceding years, were her "novitiate for Canada."

But such was not the case with Mother St. Athanasius. In her youth, she was the favored child of fortune, as well as of nature. The honorable family de Flecelles, to which she belonged, was distinguished, even in the polished circles of Parisian society.

Margaret, the pearl of that noble house, was placed, at an early age, in the Boarding school of the Ursuline Convent in the *Faubourg St. Jacques*, (Paris), an Institution then recently founded by Madame de St. Beuve, yet already flourishing and enjoying the highest reputation. Here, while her rare talents were cultivated with success, the excellent qualities of her heart were developed and fortified by the religious instructions and pious exemples of her teachers. Cheer-

ful and good humored, modest and obliging, graceful and engaging in her manners, the youthful Margaret was a general favorite, while the solidity of her judgment, her sincere and unaffected piety enchained the hearts of her friends in the lasting bonds of esteem and affection.

Returning to the bosom of her family, fitted to become its ornament as she might have been its idol, she did not suffer her soul to be fettered by the silken cords of love and ease. She had heard the voice of grace, calling her to a life of self-abnegation, and devotedness to the good of souls: waiting only to obtain the consent of her worthy parents, she hastened to present herself, in her fresh seventeen, to the Superioress of the Ursulines, in the same Convent where she had received her education. Admitted to that Novitiate where all was fervor, she pronounced her vows after two years, the usual period of probation,—and continued her course with fresh ardor, aiming at the highest perfection. Already seven years

had quickly passed away, in the service of Him who has said that his "yoke is easy and his burden light," when the little missionary band, destined for Quebec, received hospitality in the "Great Convent" of Paris.

Mother Margaret of St. Athanasius, does not appear to have been attracted by the sight of the Christian Heroines, to seek to share their enterprise, as were others of the Community. No! her vocation to Canada, like that of her call to religion, was one of pure generosity, unaided by the sensible attractions of any special grace. God had permitted her soul to be visited by a season of desolation, as dark as it was trying. In this interior conflict,—the precise nature of which is not stated,—the faithful Spouse of Jesus abandons her fate, more completely than ever, to his mercy. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" said holy Job. The pious Ursuline resolves to do still more for Him, whose hand presses so heavily upon her breaking heart. She

vows to offer herself to her Superiors, to be sent to that little Convent, devoted to the Savage tribes in Canada. So generous an act obtained its immediate reward, in that "peace of the soul which passeth understanding;" a strength unknown to her before, fortified her will, and urged her to fulfil her engagement, sacrificing a second time, her family and friends, with the Mothers and Sisters scarcely less dear of that second home, where she had hoped to pass the remainder of her days. Such was the first vigorous step of Mother St. Athanasius in the rugged path to which she had committed herself. Let us now introduce the amiable companion Providence had prepared for her, Mother Anne Le Bugle,--of St. Clare.

In her vocation, unlike Mother St. Athanasius, she is borne on the wings of a holy ardor, and deems the happiness to be chosen for the mission, lightly bought at the price of a final separation from her beloved parents, and her community. Her heart is so consumed with zeal for

the salvation of the benighted heathen of America, that she feels no longer bound by earthly ties ; and we are forced to sympathize with her weeping parents more than with herself, when they at last "*for God's sake,*" as she had entreated, consent to let her depart.

Then she casts herself with an utter abandon, into the arms of Divine Providence, without solicitude for the present, or the future. On her voyage, every thing turns out for the best : the ocean is never seen but it is "calm;" the sea-breeze ever proves "mild and refreshing" : as she nears the shore, "a clear sky is overhead ; verdant groves and lovely flowers rejoice her sight." They reach Quebec, at the end of two months (1640) without accident.

That little Convent on the beach in the Lower Town,¹ has a poor Chapel which to her looks *devout* :—within, she finds a

¹ The small house which served as a Convent over three years, stood opposite the present Church of Our Lady of Victory.

sweet solitude, where with "most amiable and saintly Sisters," she lives in "wonderful peace and union." Her cheerfulness and filial trust in God, fitted her for the trials of life; like the reed that, bending to the wind, is never crushed by the storm. This commencement was but a presage of the edification which the life of Mother St. Clare afforded, serving her Master, as she had resolved, with her whole heart, till he called her to her reward, thirty-six years later (1677).

The accession of these beloved Parisian Mothers, seems to have been highly providential for the little Convent of Quebec. It obtained the powerful aid and protection of that Monastery, the Mother House of the Congregation of Paris, which being of older date than that of Tours, and situated near the centre of the Missions of the Society of Jesus, enjoyed greater facility for promoting the welfare of the new foundation.

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honored and beloved Mother Marg. de Flecelles of St. Athanasius," describes her as a shining mirror of every virtue, nourishing her union with God by a special devotion to the Passion and to the Blessed Eucharist, assiduous to prayer, walking in the presence of God, in the constant exercise of that two-fold charity which is the abridgment of all perfection. If she still remembers the rich halls of the parental mansion, it is to provide for herself, the poorest cell, the poorest raiment, and the most menial employments in the Monastery. When her Sisters, pained to find her in the bake-house or in the wash-room, seek to persuade her to spare herself, she insists that it is her consolation to be there, and the best preservative of her health.—When from the place of command, she descends to the rank of inferior, her obedience has only acquired the additional lustre of a more perfect submission; she is the willing servant of all who need her services, more humble in heart

than it is possible for any outward circumstances to make her.

Once, only, did Mother St. Athanasius disoblige her Sisters, and give them cause for sorrow and complaint. It was when she sought and obtained of her Ecclesiastical Superior, the Bishop of Quebec, the permission to withdraw her name at the election of a new Superior, of the Monastery, wishing to enjoy the full benefit of her vow of obedience, the rest of her days.

Guided in this demand by her humility, she found from the same motive, abundant cause of confusion, witnessing the affliction of her Sisters, and by their distress knowing, truly, how very dear she was to them.

There would be much to add, here, of her zeal for the instruction of youth—a task from which she would never willingly be exempted, unless it were in her old age, the last six months of her life;—of her detachment, never suffering herself to be personally benefited by

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the many rich donations of her family; of her penitential spirit, her mortification, her zeal for the conversion of sinners, and particularly for that of the poor Indians. But let us conclude; citing from the Annals the details of the last few days of her life.

“Our venerable Mother Margaret de Flecelles of St. Athanasius, charged with years and with merits, fell ill on the 28th of May, 1695, in the eighty-first year of her age. Rising, as usual, at four o'clock, she had gone to the Choir to prostrate herself before the Blessed Sacrament. An hour later, the infirmarian perceiving that she was feeble, conducted her to the infirmary and pressed her to refresh herself by taking a little repose. ‘Oh! this will be nothing,’ said the venerable patient;—and, in the afternoon, returning to the choir, she approached the Sacrament of Penance in preparation for the Feast of the morrow, the Holy Trinity. After Communion the next morning, and after assisting at an assembly in chapter at nine o'clock,

she took her bed to rise no more. During three days, her vigorous constitution afforded hopes that the fever which was consuming her, might be abated: but on Wednesday the symptoms of approaching dissolution appeared. Mother St. Athanasius knowing the danger, asked for the last Sacraments, and received them with exemplary piety."

"Although her sufferings were great, and her soul absorbed in God, she still was attentive to all around her, receiving the visits of her Sisters with admirable kindness and cordiality.

"Perceiving that her lips were dry and parched with fever, one of us remarked it to her, asking if she would not drink to allay her thirst. She was answered by these words so full of meaning:—"I have another thirst which cannot be allayed." The Superioress, Mother Mary of the Angels, seated by her bedside, entering into her thought, added: "You thirst, dear Mother, to glorify God, to suffer for his love, to gain souls to his service." To this

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the venerable Mother replied with force :
“ Yes, yes ! I thirst to glorify God, and to love him.” Then, with the same fervor, she exclaimed, in the words of the Psalmist :—“ For thee my soul hath thirsted ! In a desert land, and where no water is ! so, in the sanctuary have I come before thee, O God, to see thy power and thy glory.”

The last moments of her life were passed in that sweet and intimate communion with God which was habitual to her, till, pronouncing three times the holy name of Jesus, she gently gave up her soul to Him who made it ; it was the 3d of June, 1695,—the sixty-third anniversary of her religious profession

“ Rev. Mother St. Athanasius will ever be regarded as a signal benefactress of this Monastery. God alone knows how much we are indebted to her. We humbly hope she already enjoys her recompense in the happiness of heaven. Her many virtues, and all our obligations, render us most sensible to her loss, and her memory will ever be held dear among us.”

In closing this slight tribute to the memory of our two first Parisian Mothers, we may remind our Readers of the three others of the same Congregation, who were welcomed to Quebec in 1671; Mother Marie Le Maire—of the Angels, Mother Marie Drouet—of Jesus, and Mother Marie Gibault du Breuil—of St. Joseph.

Thirteen years previous to the decease of Mother St. Athanasius, the Constitutions of Paris, by the advice of the Bishop, had been adopted by the Community of Quebec. These Constitutions, published first in 1623, and reprinted with some slight amendments a few years after, bear the impress of their origin,—the finger of God guiding the hand of his saints. Composed by persons of the highest merit, deeply versed in theology and in the knowledge of the human heart, every Chapter and every sentence was made the subject of careful examination, and tested by being put in practice, before it finally received the seal of Episcopal approbation. The experience of two hundred years, has but

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rendered those Constitutions more precious and venerable in this Monastery, where they are still in full force, with such modifications only as the circumstances of the times have required, and the proper authority sanctioned.

CHAPTER VII.

1697.

FOUNDATION OF THE URSULINE CONVENT OF
THREE RIVERS.

Quebec had made provision, from an early date, for the two classes of society, the most helpless and the most in need of succor,—children and the poor infirm. The College of the Jesuits, the Ursuline Convent, and the Hotel-Dieu, grew up with the rising city : the Theological Sem-

inary, with its "Little Seminary" for students, was founded by Bishop Laval, in 1663; the General Hospital, by Bishop Saint-Valier, in 1692: these were all flourishing institutions at the close of the seventeenth century. .

Montreal had also, from a period nearly coeval with its first settlement, welcomed the heroic Mademoiselle Manse, and the devoted Marguérite Bourgeois. The former endowed *Ville-Marie* with its Hospital; the latter, with an Institution for female youth, the Congregation of Our Lady (1653); the Theological Seminary of St. Sulpice, founded in 1677, offered also, the advantages of a Christian education to youth.

Three Rivers, which from the beginning of the Colony was regarded as an important post, and which received a permanent settlement, with a local Governor in 1645, had not, at the end of sixty years, an Institution either of education or of charity, beyond what the Mission of the good Jesuits and the Franciscan Fathers afforded.

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This want had no doubt seriously retarded the prosperity and importance of the rising City, whatever may have been said by a late author of the folly of founding an Hospital, almost contemporary with the settlement of a country.

The zealous Prelate who had endowed Quebec with its second Hospital, consulted with the local Governor of Three-Rivers, M. Rigaud de Vaudreuil, and it was decided that one establishment, at least, should be undertaken. Unwilling, nevertheless, to leave the sick and infirm unprovided for, he conceives the possibility of uniting the two works of mercy in one Institution. Ursulines would teach;—it is an indispensable article of their constitutions: but they could also, by Episcopal authority, attend to the wants of the sick, in a part of the Monastery to be called *The Hospital*. The project was new and untried; it is an additional proof of the zeal and spirit of sacrifice of our ancient Mothers, when they accept the foundation on these conditions.

A mansion on the margin of the St. Law-

rence had been built for the residence of the Governor : the Bishop proposed to purchase it, if it would be found suitable for a Convent. This point being left to the decision of the nuns, they must needs make the journey to see it. Rev. Mother Le Maire of the Angels with the newly appointed Superioress, Mother Marie Drouet of Jesus, and a lay Sister, issuing from the cloister, were met by the Governor of Three Rivers, M. Rigaud de Vaudreuil, the Bishop Saint-Valier, and M. de Montigny, ¹ the ecclesiastical Superior of the Monastery. The voyage was without accident, and business was settled to the satisfaction of the parties concerned, the contract passed, and the germ of a future Community planted. It was plain that the new foundation would not have to endure the hardships and privations which had attended that of Quebec ; but it is possible there will be other trials, for the works of Heaven are ever built upon the Cross.

¹ Of the Seminary of Quebec.

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A few day later, there is another parting scene at the Ursulines of Quebec. Mother Mary of the Angels stands in readiness to conduct an Assistant, Mother Le Vaillant of St. Cecile,¹ and two more of her daughters to the new Convent: Mother Marie Amiot of the Conception, and Mother St. Michel have been chosen.—But let us join the little colony, the day preceding their departure from the dear Monastery, when they go forth to pay their farewell visits to their friends in the City. Their first station is at the Castle, where they offer their respects to the veteran Count de Frontenac, and receive his compliment of adieu. They next visit the new Monastery of the Recollets, and the Bishop's palace, where a most cordial and paternal reception awaited them: the eminent Prelate conducted them himself to the Seminary, to present their homage to the

¹ Mother St. Cecile had but lately arrived from her Convent in Bayeux, France: she was a person of rare merit,—but lived only two years after joining the Ursulines of Three Rivers.

venerable Bishop Laval, and the members of his Community. Here, again, all was cordiality, and the most obliging testimonies of good will. Thence, M. de Montigny led the way to the College of the Rev. Fathers, whose hospitality was displayed by a collation, of which the nuns must partake, before they proceed to the Hotel-Dieu. The scene here, may easily be imagined. For some, it was the meeting of old schoolmates and early friends; for others, the cherished hostesses who had received with such sympathy, eleven years before, a Community without a shelter.

But let us hasten on, for at the Intendant's palace Mr. and Madame Champigny are old friends of the Monastery, waiting to give a hearty welcome to these rare visitants.—At the newly-founded General Hospital they are also eagerly expected. Is there not indeed, a new tie added to their friendship by the adoption of the title of *Hospitalières*, added to that of Ursulines? The day was scarcely long enough for all these demonstrations of interest

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and kindness. The following morning, at an early hour, we find our missionary Sisters hastening their departure, lest the farewell embrace should move them too deeply :—they only alight from the carriage to get their worthy Prelate's blessing ; then, descending Mountain Street to the Lower Town, they embark for their future home in Three Rivers.

Another voyage up the River, in the leisurely style of those days, gives Mother Mary of the Angels an opportunity to accustom herself to the features of that landscape, which still strikes the beholder with its grandeur and beauty. The milder borders of the Seine would have brought her pleasing reminiscences of her youthful days ;—the St. Lawrence carried her back to the first time she had beheld, a quarter of a century previous, the wild scenery of her adopted country.

Our limits will not permit us to follow them further, unless it be to see the return, three years later, of one of these young nuns, Mother Mary of the Conception,

whose absence had taken the light from her Mother's hearth. Mrs. Amiot had made the sacrifice of her daughter, in giving her to the Ursulines of Quebec, but she had counted on the pleasure of seeing her, from time to time, in the House where she had consecrated herself to God. Pleading her cause with a Mother's eloquence, she moved the Prelate to decide upon recalling her to Quebec. Here, her mission extended to long and useful years, as our Annals show.

In the spring of 1699, we find Mother Mary of the Angels, returning to Three Rivers as Superioress. The Bishop and the ecclesiastical Superior are there to receive the vows of five novices, and give the veil to another; thus the Community numbered eleven members, four of whom were the professed of Quebec.

Its generous founder, Bishop Saint-Valier, spared no pains, economising even upon his personal expenses, to assure the prosperity of an Institution whose usefulness he fully appreciated. During the

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yet perilous period of its foundation, Mother Mary of the Angels writes:—"I may be blamed for having undertaken this work, but after the proofs I have had that it is the will of God, I cannot repent of the essay. If I am in error, it is in company with many persons of various rank and condition, who are more enlightened than I am; and should God permit it, I shall witness the failure of the enterprise as cheerfully as its success, for I desire nothing but the accomplishment of the will of Heaven."

With sentiments like these in the foundresses of the new Monastery, it is not surprising that the blessing of God rested upon it. Superiors, already exercised in the difficult art of governing well, like Mother Le Maire of the Angels, Mother Marie Drouet of Jesus and Mother St. Teresa, were deputed from Quebec by the Bishop to guide the young Community, until, in 1731, it was found capable of subsisting by itself. Ten years previous, it is mentioned by the historian, Rev. F.

Charlevoix, as a "flourishing Monastery, composed of forty Ursuline nuns, who have the care of a fine Hospital, in addition to the labors of their Institute."

The trials which were spared in the commencement, were reserved for a later day. In 1752, the noble mansion which had sheltered the devoted Ursulines in their double mission of charity, during fifty-five years, became, in the space of a few hours, the prey of a destructive conflagration. The same fire enveloped a good part of the town in a like misfortune.

The nuns were offered hospitality by the Franciscan Fathers, who gave up their own house, retreating to a smaller one, in order to accommodate a Community in distress. An appeal to the public in favor of the victims of the conflagration, was followed by a gradual restoration of the ruined town. The Convent, also, was rebuilt in the course of the following year, Bishop de Pontbriand, in person, overseeing and sharing the labors of the re-

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construction, lodging in the house of the domestics, and paying the workmen from his own purse. The eminent Prelate died seven years later, with the glory of having accomplished to the letter the Gospel precept of bestowing his goods upon the poor, that he might have a treasure in heaven:—he is justly considered as the second founder of the Ursulines of Three Rivers. After a lapse of another half-century, a second disaster called for a similar devotedness and generosity on the part of another Bishop,—but there are details connected with that event which, to avoid anachronisms, must be reserved for a future page.

Let us not delay however to inscribe :
—Honor to the Institution, which during nearly two hundred years has rendered services of inappreciable value to all classes of society, both by its well-conducted Hospital and by its flourishing educational department.

CHAPTER VIII.

1700.

FEAST OF THE SACRED HEART ESTABLISHED.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is no longer a practice reserved to a few pious souls, who, like a St. Gertrude, a St. Catherine, a Saint Francis of Sales, or like our own Ven. Mother Mary of the Incarnation, have known, in their silent communion with Heaven, that the graces, and gifts from on high, flow most abundantly through this sacred channel.

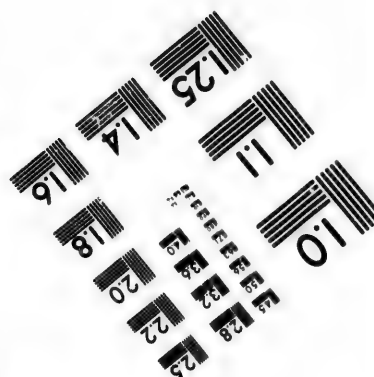
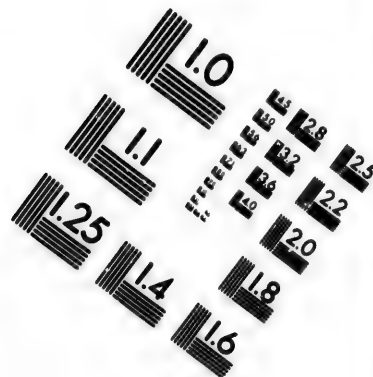
Since that auspicious day, when, in the solitary cloister of Paray-le-Monial, (1675) the voice of inspiration was heard, directing this devotion to be made public and extended to all the faithful, it has gradually taken root; the fair tree has risen, its branches have spread, its delicious fruit has been offered to every palate.

But the finger of God is apt to move slowly while it leaves its broad, and bright, and indelible trace. Thus it was, that the decree for the celebration of the Feast of the Sacred Heart throughout the Church, which has filled all Christendom with joy, was delayed two full centuries; and has but lately issued from the heart of the illustrious Pontiff, our well-beloved Holy Father, Pope Pius IX.

Canada may well exult in having understood and accepted the blessed, consoling devotion, as soon as it was made known: if it met with opposition in some parts of Europe, it found none here.

It is not surprising that the Feast of the Sacred Heart, with the other practices of adoration, reparation, and special love, which belong to it, first found a shrine in that spot where the Ven. Mother Mary of the Incarnation had so often prayed, offering her petitions to the Eternal Father on the living altar of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and where her





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daughters had since labored to keep alive the flame she had once kindled.

During the thirty-three years of Mother Mary's sojourn in Canada, she had each day lifted up her great soul to God, in that ardent effusion: — "It is through the Heart of my Jesus, my way, my truth and my life, that I approach thee, O Eternal Father,"—that form of prayer which, to day, warms thousands of hearts, happy to learn from its burning accents the secret of obtaining most efficaciously those graces which have been purchased for us by the sufferings of our Saviour, but which must be sought in an acceptable manner, ere they are bestowed upon us.

The daughters of Mother Mary of the Incarnation, imbued with her spirit of zeal and devotedness, adopted as naturally, not only her sentiments, but even the expressions that were so familiar to her.

Thus, as we meet throughout her numerous letters allusions to this effect:—
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Divine Spouse."—"I offer you daily to the Eternal Father on the sacred altar of the Heart of Jesus, &c."—so, in a letter written by one of the nuns from Paris, a short time after she had reached the Monastery of Quebec, we find this tender appeal: "I entreat you to meet me often in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, beseeching him to accomplish his holy will in me. It is there I embrace you, &c."

If as yet this devotion had not taken the form of its exterior manifestations, as was revealed, later, to Blessed Magaret-Mary, it was latent here, in every heart, and only needed a signal to burst forth. As early as 1692, we find the name of "Sr. Mary of the Sacred Heart" bestowed upon a novice. In 1699, while yet the practices of piety which are now so familiar to all Catholics, were scarcely known, in Europe, beyond the cloister walls of Faray-le-Monial, the Superioress of our Monastery, Rev. Mother Mary of the Angels, consults her nuns in Chapter, and with their advice, the first Friday of the month is set apart

for the act of Reparation to the Sacred Heart.

In the following June, the first Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, was kept as a Feast of first class, with High Mass, Vespers and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The festival was established:—and never can the Ursulines of Quebec be sufficiently grateful to God for having chosen their Chapel as the first, and during many years the only sanctuary in Canada, where the Sacred Heart received that public tribute of adoration, love and reparation which He is pleased to accept from his feeble and erring creatures.

If the homes of genius and the haunts of learning affect the spirit with a species of fascination, what must be the influence of those pious fanes, those holy places, where the pure in heart have received the visits of Angels, nay of the Lord of Angels, and have conversed with God in the manner most acceptable to his Divine Majesty.

And what is more touching for us, inhabitants of the Old Monastery, is to see in what a poor and humble shrine our Divine Lord, during fifteen years, deigned to accept the homage of his servants.

Let us re-people that little Chapel,¹ long since abandoned to other uses, but which must ever be sacred in our eyes.

Entering, while some pious members of the Confraternity are engaged in performing their stated "hour of adoration,"² we behold them, oblivious of the world,

¹ This apartment, at the south-eastern extremity of the main-building, now called the *Old Depot*, served as a Chapel in the time of Mother Mary of the Incarnation, both before the first conflagration of the Monastery in 1650, and after its restoration, till the Church was finished in 1667. The martyrs, Fathers Brebeuf and Lalemant; Mgr. Laval, the Missionaries, have all offered the Holy Sacrifice there.

² In the original Association of the S. H., each member was expected to pass an hour in prayer, in presence of the Blessed Sacrament, on one day in the year, as specified in the ticket of admission.

its cares or its enjoyments: their eyes are closed to meditate, or fixed upon the Tabernacle, where faith pierces the mysterious veils and shows the Saviour, displaying in proof of his love, that furnace of flames, his own divine Heart. Yes! "God has so loved the world" and shall we not return love for love?

Many adorers are present, perhaps, although it is not the Festival of the Sacred Heart, for each great feast of the year brings a certain number. The highest kneel beside the lowest before their common God.

But who shall tell with what sentiments the nuns, who had so long practised the devotion of the Venerable Foundress, welcomed that first Feast of the Sacred Heart! Entering their little choir, with holy joy, they adore "in spirit and in truth." Now, it is the aged Mother St. Ignatius (Charlotte Barré), who seems to have but waited for the triumph of this precious devotion, to sing her "*Nunc dimittis in pace.*" Now, it is Rev. Mother

St. Agnes, just elected Superior, with some of those ten nuns still living, who like herself, have learned the secret of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, with the lessons of religious perfection, from the lips of the Ven. Mother Mary of the Incarnation.

But when the fair proportions of our present Church arose (1723), to replace that little Chapel, it was a welcome exchange. Then the artistic taste of the nuns was called in requisition, and they vied with each other in adorning the sanctuary, especially the altar of the Sacred Heart. Not a few of our good Mothers are commended, in their obituaries, for their zeal in decorating that favorite shrine, over which the spirit of the Venerable Mother Mary of the Incarnation seems still to brood.

New members of the Association have been added from year to year, while volume after volume has been filled with the names of the best and the highest in rank and virtue, throughout the land.

A glance at those early Registers shows us such names as the following :—Bishop Saint-Valier, whose name heads the list,—the Marquis de Vaudreuil ; the Chevalier de Repentigny,—des Meloises,—de Villedonné,—de Contreccœur,—d'Argenteuil,—de Lanaudière, etc. The Marchioness de Vaudreuil, and her sister Mrs. Taschereau,—Mrs. de la Gorgendière,—de Verchères,—de St. Ours,—de Léry,—de Gaspé,—de Salaberry ; — the Baroness de Longueuil, etc., etc.

Now it is a long list of young girls ;—for, of course, no pupil would leave the Monastery without entering into the Association, so dear to her Convent Mothers. As we examine those long pages of names, priests and missionaries ; magistrates and lawyers ; officers and soldiers ; here, whole parishes ; there, congregations, families ;—the thought naturally arises ;—Were not the people of Canada, in that eighteenth century, preparing for themselves by these most salutary practices of piety, a means to escape the deluge of woes that was about to inundate the mother coun-

try; and thus to preserve, yet a while, the spirit of the middle ages, when the acknowledged object of life was to know God, and to advance daily in the path that leads to heaven?

And, if our Lord himself has promised to those who establish, practise and propagate, the devotion to the Sacred Heart, "peace and concord, fervor in the service of God, consolation in troubles and trials, with a calm confidence in the hour of death;" need we look further for the source and origin of all the graces and blessings bestowed upon this Monastery since its foundation to the present day?

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAST SURVIVOR OF 1639.

"On the 22d January 1701, our dear Mother St. Ignatius, witnessed the dawn of the great day of eternity, ardently desiring her last hour, in order to end, as she said, her sinful life, and to be united to her God. She expired in admirable sentiments of piety and joy, her last act being to press the crucifix tenderly to her dying lips."

"She was eighty-one years of age, having passed fifty-five in religion."

Thus concludes, after a long enumeration of her virtues, the Biographical Notice of Miss Charlotte Barré, the first professed of the Ursulines of Quebec. This name carries us back to the time of Madame de la Peltrie, and reminds us of scenes worthy of being portrayed before our Readers.

It is not an every-day occurrence to

meet with instances of magnanimity, such as Miss Barré, at the age of nineteen, was enabled to display, and which won her valuable and prolonged services to this Monastery.

Born in the town of Azay, near Tours, in France, of parents truly christian, Charlotte, at the age of thirteen, had already found within her heart an immense desire to consume her life in the service of God, for the salvation of souls,—but how? or where—? that was the secret of divine Providence. Her piety seems to have run in the smooth channels of fervor and peace, when, at the age of nineteen, she is sent one day, by her director, Rev. Father Salin, to introduce herself to Mother Mary of the Incarnation, and Madame de la Peltrie. From them she hears of the enterprise they have in view, and learns that Madame de la Peltrie, disappointed in a companion who had promised to accompany her, is in search of another. To the question :—"Are you willing to go with us to Canada?" Miss

Barré replies: "All my desire is to consecrate myself to God, and I shall most gladly embrace this offer, which furnishes me an opportunity of risking my life for Him."

Like the Apostles, she obeys the call of the Divine Master without hesitation, and sustains unmoved the solicitations of her family, who would have retained her. There was indeed, no time for delay, the vessels being ready to sail, —and the only favor the generous girl requested, was to take the key of her trunk, before it was carried off with the other baggage, to a trust-worthy person, in order to return some article of value, which she was keeping for a friend.

Madame de la Peltrie knew, from this moment, what a treasure she possessed. She was happy to retain her, and promised to facilitate later her entrance into the Convent, which they were going to establish, by paying her dowry. Charlotte, on the other hand, was overwhelmed with the conviction of her own un-

worthiness, and unable to understand how it was that God had placed her in the company of *saints*, calling her to share the labors, the merits, and the glory of an enterprise so sublime. In these sentiments, she humbly accompanied Mad. de la Peltrie wherever she went, as long as her services were required; then as a novice, in 1646, she applied herself with fervor to fulfil the new duties that devolved upon her, aiming at nothing less than a perfect imitation of the Divine Saviour, in his life of obedience and mortification. Her zeal for the instruction of youth, and her talent for teaching—her aptitude for every other office in the Community, rendered her most useful during her long career, while her kindness, her universal charity, her amiability, won her as much love as esteem.

The magnanimity she had given proof of, in bidding adieu to her home and country for God's sake, without a sigh, did not relapse into love of ease and comfort in later years. If she once rushed

into the flames to save those children who, in the conflagration of the Monastery¹ were exposed to perish, she never on any occasion spared herself, when there were crosses to be borne, or hardships to be endured. Whether she must have had many of these, can best be told by those who have read at length the history of the Monastery, during the first sixty years of its existence.

One that truly loves God never says: "It is enough," when there is question of corresponding to grace in the practice of virtue. "This generous soul, says the Annalist, following the example of her Divine Spouse, who calls himself the hidden God, had no other ambition but to be unknown and forgotten, treating her body as her greatest enemy, seldom approaching the fire even in the extreme rigors of winter, abstaining from food so far that she may be said to have fasted continually, refusing herself the most innocent satisfaction. Whatever leisure re-

¹ Glimpses, Part I, page 116.

mained to her, after her numerous occupations, was given to prayer. Hastening to the foot of the altar, prostrate in the humble attitude of the Publican in the Gospel, she sought to annihilate herself before God."

The long career of Mother St. Ignatius, who had crossed the Atlantic with our first Mothers. and who knew every incident of those strange early times, must have furnished a strong link in the chain of traditions that have come down to us. As we have already stated, she was the first professed of the Convent of Quebec : twenty-six choir Sisters surrounded her death bed, having made profession after her. One of these who had also seen Mother St. Athanasius, Mother Genevieve Boucher of St. Peter, prolongs her vigorous existence till 1765, having passed seventy-two years in the community. At that date, we find, among others, Mother Louise Taschereau of St. Frs. Xavier, who was still living in 1825, and consequently known to six of our present aged Mothers, who impart to others the precious

souvenirs, once derived from the venerable Mothers St. Athanasius and St. Ignatius.

Doubtless in those former times, as at the present day, it was a pleasure for the younger members to surround the aged, seeking wisdom in the company of those whose minds have been enriched by the experience of multiplied years. It is in this manner that many points of valuable information, many interesting anecdotes which have eluded the notice of the cloistered historian, are perpetuated by tradition, and thus finally transferred to record.

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CHAPTER X.

1700-1713.

DAWN OF THE XVIII. CENTURY.

There are some gloomy pages on our old Register, at the beginning of the 18th century. Within the space of thirteen years, famine, pestilence, and war, alternately menace, or invade the Colony; and on such occasions the Ursulines necessarily have their share in the common misfortunes. The scant and blighted harvest of 1700, is followed by a scarcity bordering on starvation; while an epidemy, as unknown to the medical art as it is fatal in its attacks, augments and renders more poignant the general distress. There are not enough people in health to have care of the sick, nor priests enough to attend the dying and bury the dead.

The Convent escapes the famine, but pays its tribute to the cruel malady. So

many of the nuns were prostrated by the fever, that the Infirmary not sufficing to lodge them, it was necessary to take care of them in their cells, those who waited on the others being almost as ill as their patients. The two victims of this epidemic were the Mistress of Novices, Mother Bourdon of St. Joseph ; and the charitable Infirmarian, Mother Boutet of St. Augustin.

Two years later, another malady, ever dreaded in proportion as it is known, (the small pox) made still greater ravages, carrying off, it is said, in the space of a few months, one fourth of the inhabitants of Quebec, making victims in every house, as well as in the religious Communities.

In the Monastery, every precaution had been taken to keep the unwelcome visitor at a distance, and with success until it had raged during six weeks in town. It penetrated, at last, from the adjacent Chapel, where the people had come in procession to offer prayers, and perform their devotions. A lay Sister and several

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boarders were first attacked ; a few days later, the list included seventeen nuns, and thirty-seven boarders.

In the lodgings of the servant-men, out of seven, one alone remained in health, to wait upon his companions. The department of the Externs (Madame de la Peltrie's house) was transformed into an hospital for the sick boarders ; the Infirmary and Novitiate served for the nuns. Class-duties were suspended, it being impossible to find teachers, while so many sick needed attendance night and day. There were besides, other and more sorrowful duties to be performed. Three among the nuns, all of them young, were, in the space of ten days, consigned to the tomb ; with the usual mournful rites, but without the ringing of bells, lest that tribute to the departed, should overpower the poor patients yet struggling with the fearful disease. The city authorities had, indeed, issued an order, forbidding to ring for funerals, the oft-repeated knell having so affected several persons as to hasten their death.

After another respite of two years, the winter months pass again (1706,) in bestowing compassionate cares upon the sick; seven or eight patients were confined to their bed all winter:—it was a strange intermittent fever, requiring night watching, and attentions of every kind.

Other epidemics appear again in 1709 and 1711, continuing to depopulate the Colony. On these occasions, there was much suffering, but no death occurred among the inmates of the cloister. Though our pen is weary of so mournful a page, we have yet to enumerate other calamities which befel the city, or the country, during that period of twelve or thirteen years at the beginning of the century. If these did not regard our nuns personally, they shared them by sympathy and compassion. Let us mention, first, the conflagration of the Seminary of Quebec, 1701, while the gentlemen were absent at St. Michael's with the students: then for a second time, four years later, when, considering the recent improvements, the loss was greater than on the preceding

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occasion. The buildings were all nearly finished, when a carpenter, carelessly smoking in the midst of shavings, let a spark fall, which caused this second disaster. The details are all duly consigned in our Annals, with expressions of condolence, and regret at not being able to lend any assistance in the restoration of an Institution so precious to the Colony. They do not forget the venerable Bishop Laval, whose affliction must have been great, if it was in proportion to the interest he bore this Institution, which he had founded and watched over during forty years of his episcopacy.

The captivity of Bishop Saint-Valier, detained nine years (1704-1713) as a prisoner of war in the Tower of London; the death of Bishop Laval, (1708) leaving the Colony without a chief Pastor during five years; a scarcity, bordering on famine, caused by a failure in the grain crop, ravaged by an army of caterpillars (1709); the menace of war (1710, 11) ever growing louder and more alarming, while the military preparations to defend the

city, commenced in 1689, in the immediate vicinity of the Monastery, were continued, to the great annoyance of the inhabitants of the cloister:—these are the events detailed on several pages of the Annals, forming a picture sufficiently gloomy, yet never tinged by impatience nor by despondency. The nuns are evidently not without their consolations. In fact, the life of a good religious has an intrinsic joyousness of its own, independent of outward circumstances.

Our Mothers were joined by several aspirants to the religious life, during this period, as may be seen by referring to the list of entrances. The classes were interrupted but once; and with young girls to instruct, Ursulines must be happy.

Our readers remember how providentially for Canada that dreaded invasion of 1711, combined with so much apparent ability on the part of the Colonists of New England, came to naught: a powerful fleet having been held in check by dark fogs and strong winds till, with the loss of eight hundred men by ship-

wreck, the discomfited invaders retire without even seeing the heights of Cape Diamond; or meeting with any other enemy but their own adverse fortune.

This event was recorded to posterity, by the pious Colonists, who in memory of Heaven's protection, erected an enduring monument to testify their gratitude. The votive Church of Our Lady of Victory, received the addition of a graceful portico, reared by public contribution, while the titular cognomen was changed to, "Our Lady of Victories."

But these long years, so beset with difficulties, were drawing to a close. The Treaty of Utrecht (1713), settling many political differences, was favorable to peace in America. This Treaty had also set free, after nine years' imprisonment, the illustrious Prelate, Bishop Saint Valier; and we seem to share the glad anticipations of better times, with which the "joyous firing of the cannon" announces his arrival.

"All the population hasten to the wharf

to welcome the venerated Pastor, and conduct him in triumph, while the chime of bells and the roar of artillery, mingle with their shouts of joy."

"In the course of the afternoon, adds the Annalist (August 18th, 1713), we had the pleasure of seeing our good Bishop and hearing him express his joy. For our part, great is our gratitude to the God of goodness, who has vouchsafed to grant us such consolation after our long and heavy trials."

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CHAPTER XI.

THE THREE CAPTIVES.

MISS WHEELWRIGHT MAKES PROFESSION,

1714.

Who that has read the history of New England, or of Canada, knows not the meaning of that fearful word, "captivity"? It tells of treachery, of long and bitter fireside mourning :— it brings memories of all that is most lamentable in that long dismal period of Indian warfare, and of conflict between the French and English colonies.

Our Annals and our traditions, furnish us the means of tracing, even among the Indian captives, the hand of Providence, accomplishing that truly Divine work, bringing good out of evil.

Three of our Ursuline Mothers of the

eighteenth century, owed to captivity the inestimable gift of faith, and that of a vocation to the religious life. Let us rehearse some of these tales of—happily, by-gone days.

In the environs of Boston lived, at the commencement of the last century, a highly respectable family of the name of Wheelwright.

Surrounded by such comforts as a New England home afforded, even in those early times, possessing affluence and refinement, blessed with lovely children, more precious than riches ;--happiness might have taken up her abode in that quiet country-residence, had it not been for the cruel feat of Indian treachery which we are about to relate.

Whether it was in the early spring of that year, 1703, when the red twigs of the young cherry-trees, piercing the last snow-bank, enticed children into the verge of the forest ; or whether it was in autumn, when the bright-tinted leaves of the maple, or the ripe beech-nuts rattling on the fallen leaves, tempted them to stray a few

rods from the path that led to the school-house, we cannot say:—but we know that, at a given moment, a hapless child of six or seven years, was tightly bound in the grasp of a prowling Indian, who, covering her face with his brawny hand, bore away our little Esther with rapid strides, to the thickest of the wide, old forest. Reaching the camp, and hailing with a prolonged, ho ! ho ! his savage brethren, he set down his trembling prize, by the side of his own half-clad children and their tawny mother. Then commenced the wanderings of this innocent lamb, suddenly purloined from the fold, and forced to dwell in a den of wolves. Yet, for her, they relaxed their barbarity, as far as was possible for the circumstances of savage life. The dark-eyed squaw spoke in gentle tones, and guarded with marked preference the pretty little “pale face”.

But, alas ! what altered scenes, what dismal company, for that little girl brought up with tenderest care, by her own gentle-born, loving English mother ! How long were the marches, and how tangled

the paths, when the camp broke up and the whole party set out for the chase! How rude the fare. and how repulsive the resting-place at night;—while the days lengthen into weeks, and still our little Esther solaces her childish heart with its thoughts of revenge. —“I will tell my Papa, indeed I will.”—But no papa is there more for her; and the months roll on. Her tattered school-dress, still clings to her, but it is getting short; her blond tresses forget to fall in clustering ringlets, smoothed only by the oily fingers of her squaw mother. More than this, her English prattle is almost lost, and her tongue is getting used to the strange dialect of her companions, when, one day, a Missionary appears in the midst of the Indian village.

The Black-robe is not a stranger, even to the savage Abenakis. He is invited to the best lodge, where the children are assembled to hear him tell of the Great Spirit. What does he there behold? A little white girl among the rest, a child of some eight or nine years, whose grace-

ful manners still betray the gentle teachings of her infancy. To rescue the little captive was the first thought of the good Father Bigot ; to restore her to civilized life, and to her parents, if they could be discovered. But it is well known with what difficulty an Indian would relinquish one of these adopted children. It was not possible to move, by threats or promises, the proud Abenakis, who had placed the pale flowret in his cabin. What then could the Missionary do ?—He could yet do much for her. He could watch over her ; he could teach her, like the little Indian girls, to adore and love God, there in the forest, while he waited some favorable conjuncture to set her at liberty.

No wonder that the child, intelligent beyond her age, and speaking the Indian dialect at the end of three years, as well as if it had always been hers, was ever the most attentive listener to the good Father's instructions. No wonder the woods grew pleasant to her, now that the love of God filled her young heart.

But when those bereaved parents, who had mourned their child as dead, learned that she was still living, and living in the depths of the forest with the Abenakis, the enemies of their nation,—what must have been their sentiments? The only hope of recovering their child depended upon the possibility of obtaining the influence of the French Governor. Trusting in his humanity, they present him their petition ; and little Esther, through the intermediary of Rev. Father Bigot, becomes the subject of serious negotiations between the Marquis de Vaudreuil and the Chief of the Abenakis. Even under such patronage, it was no easy matter to obtain the release of the charming and well-beloved prisoner.

Powerful presents, at last, overcome their reluctance, and the Indian Chief delivers up the little English girl to the great Captain of the French.

Exchanging the bark-roof of the wigwam, for the Vice-regal residence of the Governor, at Quebec, the youthful Esther,

now in the eleventh year of her age, speedily wins the love and admiration of her new friends. The Marquis feels for his *protégée* the tenderness of a father, and while awaiting an opportunity to restore her to her parents, provides for her welfare as if she were, indeed, his own child, by placing her in the Convent. Her home still lay at the distance of seven hundred miles; the intervening wastes, without roads, were at this time infested by wandering bands of savages, at enmity—the Iroquois and the Abenakis.—Four years passed away, without lessening that distance, or the difficulties of communication.

The young girl, happy in her Convent-home, had made her first Communion, with angelic fervor; and having acquired the graces and accomplishments which became her so well, she was recalled to the home of her protector, at the Castle of St. Louis. Very soon, however, the Marquis was informed that Miss Wheelright's only desire was to prolong her stay in the Monastery, and even to share the life of

her pious Convent-Mothers; but he naturally refused his consent, and sought with more activity, to discover some means of sending the lovely young girl to her parents, whose grief he compassionated so sincerely. He conducted her to Three Rivers, placing her, while he remained there, with our Ursulines; and afterwards to Montreal, where she was protected by the good Mothers of the Hotel-Dieu.

Unsuccessful in his laudable attempts, on account of the continuance of hostilities between the Colonies,¹ the Governor, at last, consented to her return to the convent. Our Mothers, struck with the peculiar circumstances of the case,—the long years during which the two countries being in a state of warfare, it had been impossible to restore her to her parents;—the changes that might have taken place in her family;—and, above all, the will of Divine Providence manifesting itself by the course of events, ad-

¹ In 1711 a fleet, under the Admiral Walker attempted to take Quebec.

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mitted the interesting captive to the Novitiate, in October, 1712. During the following year, news of the treaty of peace between France and England, restored the Colonies to comparative security, and the Ursulines were in daily expectation of hearing from their beloved novice's family. She had taken the white veil, with the name of Mother Esther of the Infant Jesus. Her two years of probation had not expired, when, at last, messengers reached Quebec, bearing letters from Mr. and Mrs. Wheelwright. Her heart was not insensible to the pleasure of beholding the signature of a beloved father and mother;—but the voice of grace was louder than that of nature in her well-balanced soul; and she finds strength to resist the importunities of her family, as well as the exhortations of her friends at the Castle. Far from renouncing her cherished vocation, she entreats the Bishop to hasten the day of her final engagement, by admitting her to the vows of religion.

She addresses the same petition to the

Governor, whom she considers as her adopted father, and to the Community, the Mothers and Sisters of her choice, who were now dearer to her than family or home. After mature deliberation, taking into consideration that the young girl, according to the French laws was now of age, and that on the other hand she had no longer the use of the language of her native country, nor would she find there, the means to practice the religion she had embraced,—ascertaining also that the Bishop, as well as the Governor, had given their assent, the nuns admit her to pronounce her vows: thus settling the question according to her desires, beyond repeal.

In the eloquent address of the Rev. Father Bigot to the youthful novice, at her reception, we have noticed that he makes mention of this circumstance "that as long as she had been a minor she had no opportunity of returning to her country; that now being of age, her parents cannot object to her choice of a vocation, or if they should disapprove.

it will be because they are not aware of its excellence and its sanctify : he exhorts the happy novice to lasting gratitude for the favors of Divine Providence in her regard, and tells her she may well exclaim in the words of the prophet King : "The God who has wrought these wonders in my behalf is the Lord of the eternal ages : ever shall he be my God ! under his amiable law I shall live secure !"

Mother Esther Whechwright of the Infant Jesus is another of those ancient nuns whose names are never pronounced but with love and veneration in the Community which she edified and served during sixty-six years.

She is not however, the only one of the Indian captives who found the liberty of the soul and the light of faith, in recompense for earthly misfortunes.

With her memory we naturally associate Miss Davis and Miss Jeryan, rescued like her from captivity among the Abenakis, to end their days in the sweet

captivity of Jesus Christ in the Monastery.

Miss Mary-Ann Davis, in religion Mother Mary Benedict, was already a professed nun some years, when our little Esther entered the Convent as boarder.

Born in the village of Salem, Massachusetts, she had been taken captive (1686) at the age of six years, by a war party, after seeing her parents massacred and her house in flames. To recount her subsequent fate, her adoption by the Chief of the tribe, who cherished the little orphan more tenderly than his own children ;—her life in the woods, where she learned to plant the maize or gather baskets of fragrant wild-berries, but knew not the taste of bread, nor the use of a needle ;—would be to repeat, in part what has been related of our interesting Esther. Let us merely tell how another Apostle of the Abenakis, Rev. Father Rasle, found little Mary-Ann docile to his instructions, and faithful in following his

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counsels, till after many difficulties and delays, he succeeded in extricating the young girl, at the age of seventeen or eighteen, from the perils and hazards of savage life:—then, after finding friends for her among the French, he placed her as boarder in the Convent. This was the “House of Jesus” of which she had heard so much, and which she already regarded as her future home. Passing from the classes to the Novitiate, in 1698, she was admitted to profession two years later, and was thus the first Ursuline of English descent in the Monastery of Quebec.

Fifty years spent in the service of Him who had spoken to her heart there in the depths of the primeval forests, were not too long to testify, every day, her gratitude, by her fidelity to the least point of the rule she had embraced. Humble, meek, laborious, submissive and pious, her life in the Convent was like the fragrant May-flower of the woods of Maine, delighting all by its gentle perfume, while it hides itself in the most shady recesses,

of the valley where it has chosen its retreat.

The third captive who became an Ursuline nun, was Miss Mary-Dorothea Jerrean. Borne off to the woods at so tender an age that she had no recollection of any other house but the wigwam where she was living, she had marked the lapse of years only by the springing flowers or the falling snow, until the same missionary who had baptized Miss Davis, met this other little wanderer, and taught her to know the true God. Regenerated in the saving waters of baptism, and instructed in the sublime truths of religion, Mary-Dorothea felt her youthful heart beat with the desire that constitutes an Ursuline,—that of teaching other souls the way of salvation, while the Celestial Bridegroom, inwardly inviting her, bade her hope for the day when she would become his consecrated spouse.

Another missionary succeeding the martyred Father Rasle, cultivated with care this lily of the woods. Transplanted,

at length to another soil, after some fifteen years had gone by, and placed within the pale of civilization, it was yet a toil to engraft upon those rudimental dispositions, the forms of education and refinement.

Her liberator, Rev. Joseph Aubery, constituted himself her teacher, until having acquired a sufficient knowledge of the French to be able to make herself understood, she was placed at our classes. The progress of the new pupil was not rapid; but our Mothers, having regard to the good will of the subject, her precious dispositions, her piety and zeal, admitted her to the Novitiate; and, after the usual delay required by our rules, to profession (1722).

The future career of Mary-Dorothea, now known as Mother St. Joseph, fully justified the hopes that had been entertained of her usefulness. The Monastery became her second home and country, a thousand-fold dearer to her than her birth-place or native land. During the siege of

Quebec by the English in 1759, when the nuns were forced to abandon their sacred asylum, seeking safety beyond the walls of the besieged city, nothing, could equal the grief of Mother St. Joseph.

Would the victors, her countrymen, now become the persecutors of her Community? Was the country of her adoption destined to lose the priceless gift of faith, through the instrumentality of her own race?—These afflictive thoughts joined to an enfeebled state of health, rendered her exile from her beloved cloister, one long agony. Her heart had received its death-wound, and when, on the 13th September, she became aware of her approaching dissolution, she hailed the approach of her last hour, as a prisoner would welcome the joyful news of his speedy release. The reception of the last consolations which the Church offers her children, soothed her dying moments, as she passed away to a better country, on that memorable 14th Sep-

tember, (1759) which marked the downfall of the French Government in Canada.

[This temporary sojourn of the Ursulines with the beloved Mothers of the General Hospital, was marked in many ways for long remembrance: we shall only mention here, with gratitude, the cordial hospitality, exercised towards our whole Community by those true friends, during that memorable period;—reserving other details for the proper date, —1759.]

CHAPTER XII.

1712-1723.

THE MONASTERY ENLARGED.

Within the space of eleven years, from 1712 to 1723, the Monastery attained the proportions which were found sufficient for the wants of its inhabitants till more than a century later.

It was a period when the Colony was entering upon a new phase of its existence. Public calamities were to be followed by a season of comparative repose and prosperity; there was to be a respite from hourly dread of the Iroquois; the future conquerors of Canada also were, unknowingly, willing to wait their day. During the judicious administration of Governor de Vaudreuil, up to 1725, the resources of the country were considerably developed; many internal improvements were effected, while the population increased to 25,000 souls.

The Ursulines seem to have noted the "signs of the times." As early as 1712, we find them deliberating in Council, and unanimously deciding upon enlarging the Monastery and rebuilding the Church, notwithstanding the depressed state of their finances. According to the original plan, the buildings to be constructed would have completed a quadrangle, with a front of more than two hundred feet, facing Donnacona Street, and forming a large interior court-yard.

It was Rev. Mother Le Maire of the Angels, the last survivor of the nuns from France, who at the age of seventy-one, undertook this arduous enterprise; pressing its execution with vigor and obtaining, several times, generous subsidies from her wealthy relatives in Paris. The process of construction was necessarily tedious and expensive; but far greater were the difficulties, when it was ascertained that the plan was really too vast for the immediate wants, as well as the actual resources of the Community. The found-

ations already commenced had to be abandoned, and begun anew in another direction, at the price of much loss and delay.

The only part Rev. Mother Mary of the Angels saw completed, was the Novitiate, an addition, seventy-five feet in length, to the wing styled, "*La Sainte Famille*," which had been erected in 1687.

The parlors were also commenced by her, and the foundations of the present Church; but the aged Mother was then taken from her labors to Her eternal rest, and the task of continuing them devolved on another Superioress, Rev. Mother Angelique of St. John. The building fronting the street, destined for the conventual entrance, and the parlors, was completed in 1717. Then, only, could the nuns continue the construction of their "second Temple," and that they did with such ardor, that they labored at it with their own hands.

The Annals relate the building of the Church as follows :—"On recommencing

the labors, we dressed a little Indian boy, to represent the Infant Jesus, and caused him to lay the corner-stone in honor of St. Joseph. Then each one devoted herself with all the energy of which she was capable, to contribute to the erection of that sacred edifice which had so long been in contemplation. At the hours when the masons were absent at their meals, we used to mount upon the scaffolding, carrying up the stone and the mortar, our Mother Superior leading the way, and the Community following her example with alacrity and emulation. With the blessing of God, every thing seemed to succeed marvellously.

“When the masons were served, all returned to their respective labors, some to painting, gilding or embroidery; some wrought tapestry or bark-work, others made artificial flowers:—this was to augment our revenues and aid in paying the workmen. During all this time, adds the Annalist, we omitted none of our spiritual Exercises, we infringed upon none of our holy rules and

observances. We have also to be thankful that not one of the laborers met with any accident while working on our buildings. A kind Providence has blessed us in a special manner, enabling us to meet all these expenses, notwithstanding the loss of half our income, by the reduction of the funds on the Hotel-de-Ville, in Paris."

The construction of the Church was terminated; an altar had been raised: and, although no pillars yet lifted their crowning capitals around it; no sculptured decorations adorned the sanctuary, no paintings hung along the naked walls, yet the sacred edifice, bare of all ornament, could be called the "House of God;"—and great were the rejoicings of the Ursulines, who, for thirty years, had suffered to see the Tabernacle reposing in that narrow chamber, on which, through courtesy alone, they could bestow the name of Chapel.

These rejoicings were not confined to the inmates of the cloister: the citizens

of Quebec shared the same sentiments, as they proved by coming in crowds to celebrate with them three consecutive festivals:—the ceremony of the consecration, the Feast of the Assumption; and that of the holy Relics. At all these pious festivities Bishop Saint-Valier presided, with his clergy, in the midst of all that was then most distinguished in the City.

Although consecrated, the Chapel still required the presence of workmen, and did not serve regularly for Mass and the observances, until the 19th March following (1723).

It belonged to St. Joseph the titular patron of the Church and of the Monastery, to transfer the Blessed Sacrament to the new Altar, as to another Nazareth, after a longer exile than that he once endured in Egypt.

It was only thirteen years later (1735) ¹ that the architectural decorations, designed, it is said, after a plan of the private

¹ The college of the Jesuits commenced in 1635, was completed about the same time (1730).

chapel of Louis XIV, gave the last finish to the interior, rendering the Church of the Ursulines one of the neatest, considering its dimensions, of the four principal churches in the City. The gilding, of which there is that profusion required by the taste of those times, was all executed by the patient toil of the nuns themselves.

The paintings with which it is adorned at the present day, belong to a later period,—the beginning of the nineteenth century.

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CHAPTER XIII.

QUEBEC IN 1720:—

REVIEW OF THE NOVITIATE OF THE URSULINES,
AT THE SAME DATE.

An amiable historian, writing in 1720, has left us a picture of life and manners in Quebec, at once so graphic and so curious in its details that, although it has often been copied, it will bear repetition, and will help to set off another picture less known,—that of life and society in the cloister.

Recording his personal observations, Charlevoix says:—"There are not more than 7,000 souls in Quebec; but one finds there a little world where all is select, and calculated to form an agreeable society. A Governor General with his staff,—nobles, officers, and troops; an Intendant, with a Superior Council, and inferior courts; a Commissary of Marine, a Grand

Provost, a Grand Voyer; a Superintendent of Waters and Forests, whose jurisdiction is certainly the most extensive in the world; merchants in easy circumstances, or, at least, living as if they were; a Bishop and a numerous clergy; Recollets and Jesuits; three female communities, well established; other circles elsewhere, as brilliant as those surrounding the Governor and Intendant:—in short, it seems to me, that for all classes of persons, there are abundant means of passing the time agreeably. Every one contributes to his utmost. There are games and excursions, the parties using in Summer *calèches* or canoes; in winter they have sledges and snow-shoes to bear them over the snow and ice. Hunting is a favorite amusement: many gentlefolks have no other resource for living comfortably.

“Current news are confined to a few topics, as the country does not afford many. The news from Europe comes all at once, but lasts all the year, furnishing endless comments upon the past and conjectures upon the future. The arts and

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"The Canadians breathe, from their
birth, an air of liberty which renders
them very agreeable in social intercourse.
Nowhere else is our language spoken in
greater purity: one observes no defective
accent.

"There are no rich people here; if there
were they would do honor to their for-
tune, as very few persons trouble them-
selves about laying up riches. They live
well, if they can also afford to dress
well; if not, they spare at table in order
to wear richer apparel. And it must be
allowed that dress becomes our Cana-
dians. They are fine looking people, and
the best blood of France runs in their
veins. Good humor, refined and genteel
manners, are common to all, and rusticity
either in language or habits, is unknown,
even in the distant country-places."

Thus far our historian: let us now
inquire at the Ursulines, how that "little
world" described as so delightful, is re-

presented with them. Entering the Novitiate, new and lightsome, commanding a pleasant prospect from its windows that overlook the garden and wide extending landscape, we find assembled under the eye of a grave but gentle Mother-Mistress, twenty young ladies, of whom four wear the badge of probation, the white veil. These must have but lately renounced the good cheer, the pleasures, and amusements, which even the dispassionate Jesuit seems to have found so engaging.

A glance upon the old Register shall be our guide, for in the cloister rank and title count as nothing: the only precedence acknowledged among sister-novices, is founded on the relative date of their entrance. The family name however proud or honorable, is laid aside, and the spouse of Christ is henceforth known by some appellation that serves to remind her of heaven, more than of earth.

First, then, in seniority of profession, we meet Mother Esther Wheelwright—of the Infant Jesus: she has nearly com-

pleted her sixth year in the Novitiate, and will therefore soon exchange the first place here, for the last in the Community; and happier will she esteem herself in occupying that last place, than when, in later years, she will be called to govern the Monastery as Superioress. Her history is somewhat known to our readers, as well as that of the last white-veiled novice, Sr. Mary-Dorothea Jeryan of St. Joseph; we have called them:— "*The Captives*."

Unmindful of the etiquette of the Convent, we shall revive, for the moment, discarded honors, to present Miss Charlotte de Muy (Mother St. Helen) daughter of the Chevalier Danneau de Muy, Governor of Louisiana; and her cousin Marie-Anne de Boucherville (Mother St. Ignatius), naming one of her venerable ancestors, Pierre Boucher de Boucherville, first Governor of Three Rivers.

Not six months after the entrance of Miss de Muy, the Monastery-door opened to the eager appeal of Miss Catherine de

Ramesay, now known as Sr. St. Radagonde, daughter of the Chevalier Claude de Ramesay, Seigneur of Sorel and Ste. Marie le Mannoir, Governor of Montreal. The absence of Miss de Ramesay and Miss de Muy from the circles of fashion in Montreal, doubtless produced a sensation, at the time:—in the parental mansion, above all, there was a void left which it was difficult to fill. But they, if not indifferent to the charms of a flattering world and their own high position, found strength to despise them, and they considered it as gain to exchange the highest worldly distinctions their country could afford, for the humblest rank in the House of the Lord. For the benefit of such as cannot believe in a disinterested sacrifice, let us open the Annals at once, to see to what grade Miss de Ramesay aspired in religion, on quitting the highest in society. “From the day of her entrance into the Novitiate, she gave proof of the excellence of her vocation by laboring seriously to advance in perfection.—She pronounced her vows in the

most edifying dispositions, to her great satisfaction as well as to ours. From this moment she advanced daily in the practice of every virtue, detached from every thing created, zealous for the instruction of youth, and for all that regarded the service of God, avoiding the parlor, and every thing that could remind her of the world she had abandoned."

As to Mother Marie-Anne de Boucherville, of St. Ignatius, one line will suffice to characterize her. On our usual authority,—the Annals—we can assert that she had retained one predominant passion: it was "to employ every moment of her time for the benefit of the Community, or in aiding and rendering service to her Sisters. She rejoiced to be second in the offices, seeking in the obedience she rendered her companion, more frequent opportunities to practise her favorite virtue, humility."

Not less edifying in piety and abnegation, was the religious career of Mother de Muy—of St. Helen, whose health gave small promise of a long life. Delicate and

fragile as was the casket, the pearl it enclosed was of great price :— a gifted and energetic mind, “enabled her to render great services in the classes, notwithstanding the long sufferings which she endured with astonishing courage.” To her pen, as Annalist, the Convent owes long and interesting details of the seven years’ war, that closes the French domination in Canada; her own death on that memorable 14th September, silently imparting new pathos to the sad picture she draws of the distress and defeat of her countrymen.

But returning now to the 31st August, 1717, the day when Miss Ramesay, in the midst of the élite of the society both of Quebec and Montreal, receives the white veil from the hands of Bishop Saint-Valier, and Rv. Father Gerard, S. J., makes a “ravishing discourse” on the happiness to be found in the service of God, we may discover among his auditors the sudden awakening of another religious vocation.

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a "young worldling," whom we now introduce as Mother St. Borgia, lately Miss Catherine-Margaret des Meloises. That white veil and linen band conceal a brow which was then adorned with all that is most admired in wreathing tress, or sparkling gem, or opening rose-bud. That sable robe of serge, replaces the rich brocade or floating gossamer, that often enveloped her graceful form, radiant with the fickle joys of the ball-room, at the Castle, the palace of the Intendant, or the "brilliant circles elsewhere."

The transformation is due to divine grace, which, after pursuing her with gentle importunity from her early years, had asserted its claims victoriously on the occasion just alluded to. Issuing from that little Chapel, where the voice of an internal monitor had seconded the eloquence of the sacred preacher, unable to control her emotion, she flies from the presence of the gay company that had attended her; she hastens along the yet deserted streets. "Passing the door of the Jesuits' Church she enters. There,

alone with her reflections, in the presence of God, listening to the reproaches of her conscience and to the voice of grace, she begins to detest a life of vanity ; she begs pardon for her long resistance and delay ; she implores the divine mercy for strength and courage to break the ties that bind her to the world, humbly confessing her own weakness and inability without the powerful aid of Heaven : she addresses herself to the Blessed Virgin and to the saints, particularly to St. Francis Borgia, to whom she had a special devotion.

“ Her prayer had been already accepted ; she rises comforted, strengthened in her resolution to give herself entirely to God. During the two years she was still obliged to delay entering the Monastery, never more was she to be met with at *soirée* or ball, or party of pleasure. And when, at last, having arranged with her brother and sisters all that regarded her inheritance, she humbly demanded and obtained admittance among the daughters of St. Ursula, the Novitiate appeared to

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her the gate of Paradise; she longed for the day, when she would put off her worldly attire, as a mark of her voluntary divorce with the world.

“ From that moment she seemed indeed to become a new creature in Jesus Christ. Her piety was most exemplary, her charity unbounded. Her detachment from self and from every thing earthly; her mortification, her fidelity to the observance of the rule and her holy engagements, rendered her a bright example of what is meant by religious perfection. It was necessary, on more than one occasion to moderate her fervor, which always exceeded her strength. Her services, which were extended to all, even to the lay-Sisters in their laborious avocations, were especially precious in the classes, where her zeal for the salvation of souls, and her own experience of the vanity of the world, made her eloquent in exhorting her young charge to avoid its snares, and to assure their salvation by the practice of virtue.

“ Although she loved her family tenderly, she was extremely guarded in speaking of her relatives, and if, in conversation, there was any allusion to the nobility of her birth, she evidently suffered, and would adroitly introduce some other topic of discourse.

“ One which suited her humility better was, to be reminded of her defects; and, seeking to expiate the self-love which once led her to relish compliments, she would willingly tax herself with hypocrisy, when her piety—for want of some other fault more apparent—would be discreetly blamed, as excessive.

“ In short, our fervent Mother St. Borgia, pressed with such ardor the affair of her perfection that she won her crown early, passing from the Novitiate, her earthly Paradise, to that above, just as she was completing the fourth year of her religious profession.”

We have insensibly been led to dwell too long, perhaps, upon the interesting Miss des Meloises. The “ little world ” of

Quebec has yet other representatives of its highest circles in this Novitiate of 1720. Here are the two daughters of Mr. Charles Gaillard, member of the Supreme Council,—Mother Marie-Louise of the Virgin, and Mother Marie-Clare of St. Thomas; these fervent young girls, have each chosen the narrow path, in preference to the broad and flowery one, before they had attained their sixteenth year.

Here are also, daughters of merchants and professional men, of the type named by our historian, "in easy circumstances."—Miss Angelique Perthuis, (Mother of the Angels), novice of the white-veil; and among the professed, Mother St. Francis Xavier, (Miss Louise C. Pinguet-Vaucours), Mother Teresa of Jesus (Miss Françoise Baudouin); Mother St. Elizabeth, (Miss Angelique Langlois); Mother St. Stanislas, (Miss Angelique Normandin). These four young girls have discovered in early youth, that the world, all fascinating as it may appear, is insufficient to satisfy the cravings of the soul for happiness: they have sought it in the service

of Him who has declared that "His yoke is easy and His burden light:" the testimony of those who lived with them, till the close of their peaceful lives is;—that they found within our cloister "the hundred-fold" that is promised by One who cannot deceive.

Let us now introduce a few more young ladies from Montreal. In the course of the same year that saw Miss de Ramesay quit the gay world for the cloister, her example was followed by three of her former companions, Miss Marie-Renée du Mesnil, (Mother St. Gertrude), whose father accumulates the titles of Major in the army, Lieutenant of the Navy, Knight of the Order of St. Louis, &c. "This amiable Mother, writes the Annalist thirty four years later, adorned with all the qualities that would have enabled her to occupy with advantage the high position Providence had assigned her in society, had the greatest esteem for a life hidden in God. Penetrated with sentiments of humility, and submissive to the will of Heaven, she rejoiced in those in-

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firmities which rendered her incapable of occupying any office of importance, or of discharging those duties of the Institute, at once so delightful, so meritorious, and so honorable.

Another of Montreal's high-born ladies among our novices is Mother St. Anthony, daughter of Charles-Juchereau Duchesnay. Like the other young ladies we have named from Montreal, Miss Teresa Juchereau formed her first acquaintance with the Ursulines as a boarder. Returning to the bosom of her family, where she was cherished most tenderly, at the same time that she was surrounded by all that is most calculated to dazzle the youthful imagination and soften the heart, she had not always paused, to distinguish between what she owed to her position in society, and what she was giving to her own love of the world, and to vanity. That dangerous passion was taking deep root in her heart, while the daily round of dissipation and pleasure was as surely extinguishing all true piety. Our Annalist notes the vocation of Miss Juchereau as "a conquest

of grace, the fruit of a fervent retreat, "This privileged soul won heaven early, her exile being abridged by the Divine Master in order to hasten her recompense."

As to Miss de Repentigny (Mother St. Agatha), although Miss Juchereau's friend, we shall reserve the particulars of her vocation for another moment; and introduce next, Miss Elizabeth Joseph de Villedonné, whose father was Etienne de Villedonné, Captain of a detachment of the Marine. Unlike the two last named young ladies, Miss de Villedonné, during the two or three years of her absence from the Convent, never shared but with reluctance, in the gay amusements that offered her their attractions.

Three other novices remain to be introduced: they are not from the cities of Quebec or Montreal, but from country-manor or farm-house, not less attractive.

From the Island of Orleans there is Mother St. Margaret, (Miss Le Clerc); from Chateau-Richer, Mother St. Monica

(Miss Marguerite Cloutier); from the parish of St. Joachim, Mother St. Agnes, (Miss Marie-Ann Buteau), who is destined to outlive all her companions of the Novitiate, prolonging her active and useful existence to the age of eighty-three years.

The ceremony of this introduction has been long, yet would we name our three good lay-Sisters, whose services are not less precious in the eyes of God and of his Saints, nor less appreciated by the Community, than those of the Choir-Sisters.

They are Srs. St. Thecla (Blanche Marier), Mary of the Resurrection (Marie-Anne Racine), and Sr. St. Andrew (Marie-Julienne Maufis): the two last named live cheerfully their fifty years, in the humble occupations to which are attached equal rewards, and far greater facilities for acquiring them, than in the more arduous, or honorable offices in the Community.

As we retire from that Novitiate, where we have seen so many young ladies

generously triumphing over the sentiments of nature, and trampling upon all that is most esteemed and sought after in the world, are there not some among our readers who are struck with apprehension and pity, as if they had just beheld so many victims doomed to feel the intolerable weight of perpetual solitude, and to drag out their weary existence in the bonds of an unvarying submission to obedience and rule? Are there not some who forget what the Apostle says of himself: "That the world is crucified to him, as he is to the world, and yet that he superabounds in joy?"

But the firm decision of each at the trying moment of separation from home, and her perseverance in her cherished vocation, is the best reply to any misgiving of the kind. Truly the cloistered nun may say: I have separated myself from all that the world holds dear and delightful, but I have done so willingly, and I consider such a loss my greatest gain. It is my pleasure, my honor, henceforth to seek to live for God alone,

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serving my fellow creatures for the love of God. I trust myself to one who does not change ; in him I shall find a remedy for my own inconstancy. " Here, as Thomas a Kempis promises, I am excited to good by example, and warned from evil by admonition. Here, are diverse offices, and one spirit of charity. Here, when one is weary of attendance on duty, another supplies her place ; while one reads many are edified, and each having her weekly course, all are mutually relieved. When one happily sleeps in the Lord, she has many intercessors to deliver her the sooner from the place of expiation.—Her labor and good conversations will not be forgotten, but will profit many, in future times for an example."

Here, as St. Clement and St. Basil tell, " One is able to pray for me to God, another to console me when sick ; another to teach me what is useful to salvation : another will correct me with kindness, or consult together with me like a friend ; and all will love me truly, without guile, without flattery. O sweet attendance of

friends, O blessed ministry of comforters, O the faithful services of those who fear only God, O the true simplicity which is incapable of a falsehood, O the honorable labor which is in obedience to God, to please God!

“O monastic life, holy, angelical, blessed! No tongue can express the sentiments of love which I feel for thee, no voice can paint the joy with which thou dost fill my heart!”

No wonder, then, that the happy soul, chosen by Heaven for so sublime a vocation, makes her whole life-time, one hymn of thanksgiving.

By fidelity to her rule, to prayer, and the sacraments, she obtains strength to sustain with joy the gentle yoke of Christ, laboring at stated hours in the school room or in the service of her sisters; having no other end in view but to accomplish her duty for the love of God. But let us also inquire, what provision has been made for relaxation and repose.

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in olden times, and still adhered to as much as is possible, is something remarkable. Each hour has, it is true, its allotted occupation, from the time when the bell at four o'clock announces the hour to rise, till the signal for retiring before nine in the evening; yet with such amplitude of space, such "*roominess*" as Faber calls it; that one duty presses not on the steps of another, in such a manner as to give the feeling of being enchained or enslaved. There are intervals, of more or less duration, which serve as a halt or resting-spot for the feeble, at the same time that it is a spur to the vigorous, by affording occasion for some spontaneous act of piety, kindness, or zeal.

The hour of recreation is esteemed of the same value for heaven as the hour of prayer; it is enjoyed with zest, in proportion to the silence that precedes. The gayety of conversation is pure and sincere. It is the family circle, without its anxieties and cares; it is society, without its tedious forms and shallow compliments.

There are *excursions* too, in summer, when the day is fine; for the Convent grounds are spacious, and not devoid of shade. The birds seem to sing more sweetly there than any where else, and build their nests, in security, in every clump of lilac, plum, or cherry trees. The buzz and hum of bees and every gay-winged insect that loves to nestle in the cups of flowers, make music that is not lost by the over-boisterous merriment of the groups that stroll leisurely through the winding alleys of the old garden.

Here, a favorite bed of pansies, there, a mingled glow of roses, pinks, and lilies, the gaudy tulip or the g'adiolus, attract and delight the eye; or it is growth of some new shrub or tree that is watched with interest. The wonders of vegetative life, the special beauty of each leaf, afford pleasure to the contemplative mind, shadowing forth the beauties and wonders of that unseen world, to which she constantly aspires.

Or, let it be a later hour, when the offices

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and duties of the day being over, the evening is closing around the Monastery in that mysterious silence which is its greatest charm. Then it is that the sacred words of the Divine Office are heard, from many voices that form but one chant, in which the Angels join, although their heavenly accents may be inaudible to mortal ear.

Thus falls the curtain of night around the peaceful cloister, while each one, according to the attractions of grace, enters into the recesses of her own conscience; there, finding all at rest, all passions hushed, who can tell the deep feeling of security and thanksgiving that sweetly fills the soul, rendering that humble cell an image and an anticipation of Paradise.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHAPEL OF SAINTS.

A little sanctuary, much frequented by the inmates of the cloister, a sort of pilgrimage to which they resort with special confidence and consolation, is known as the Chapel of Saints. An ancient gilded statue of Our Lady of Great Power, occupies the centre of the altar, amid sculptured decorations;—the whole breadth of of the wall on either side, being covered with paintings, and reliquaries of various size and form; the larger ones resting on gilded stands, the smaller ones, enclosed under glass, in the four pilasters that support the arching entablature. The vaulted ceiling, painted of the color of the sky, is studded with gilded stars, while the central arch, over the altar, encompasses a painting; as if the skies had opened there to permit the view of the heavens beyond. The nine choirs of Angels, the

various ranks of Saints, bearing aloft the symbols of their triumph, surround the throne of the Most High, in the midst of a glory, to which the unaccustomed eye lends splendors ever new, and depths ever widening into the vast abyss of eternity.

[This is the Chapel of Saints as it was, not many years ago, and as we hope it yet will be:—its present appearance is not so striking.]

But the wealth of the Chapel consists in the quantity of relics with which it has been endowed: the antiquity of the shrines even, that enclose them, and the names of the donors, add new interest to the objects, already so precious in themselves.

Among the first of these pious donors, we may mention Don Claude Martin, who was a Benedictine Monk. He had already in 1662, procured for the Monastery which his Ven. Mother had founded, and where she was then living, the relics of the martyrs, Justus, Modestus, Maximin and Felix.

One of the Ursulines of Metz, sent us from Cologne, precious relics of St. Ursula and her companions.

Madame de Guise, Abbess of Mont Martre gave others. In 1671, Mother Le Maire of the Angels, coming to the Monastery, brought relics of the martyrs, Placide, Firmin, Januarius, Peregrinus and Honorius, which her brother the Abbé Le Maire, had procured for her in Rome. Some years later Rev. Father C. Boilleau, another relative of Mother Mary of the Angels, enriched the Monastery with a casket containing the entire body of the holy martyr St. Clement, which he had obtained from Pope Innocent XI. Other relics of the Martyrs, Vital, Amy, Denis, Candid, Marcellinus, &c., whose names are venerable and illustrious for their sufferings for Jesus' sake, were bestowed by the same generous friend.

In short, so large a quantity of these treasures had been received, from various pious donors, that in 1674, it was decided

to prepare a Chapel where they might be deposited with special honor.

This primitive Chapel perished in the conflagration of the Church and choir, of which it formed a part, in 1686.

But the relics were not suffered to perish. A lay-Sister, animated with such fervor as gave her new strength and courage, persisted in transporting them, till she had nearly become herself a martyr to her pious zeal, as we have elsewhere related.

In times more recent, other treasures of a similar nature have been added. Looking over the Catalogue, we find the names of St. Augustin, the great Legislator of Monastic institutions, St. Francis of Sales, "the most amiable saint;" Ignatius of Loyola and others formed to sanctity in his Society,—St. Fr. Xaverius; St. Aloysius and St. Stanislaus, the patrons of youth; St. Angela Merici, foundress of the Ursulines; St. Madeleine de Pazzi, &c. The recent martyrs of China and

Japan are also represented there, as well as those of Canada.

Our Chapel of Saints has other objects of still higher antiquity. Like the "Sainte Chapelle" in Paris, it has a parcel of the True Cross and of the Crown of Thorns; the former enclosed in a small crystal tube, forms the centre of a silver cross about fourteen inches in height; it was presented to the Monastery in 1677, by Don Claude Martin. Other touching souvenirs of Golgotha, are a Fac Simile of one of the nails that pierced our Blessed Saviour's hands; another of the holy shroud that enveloped his sacred Body in the tomb; a crown of thorns, made (lately) from such thorns as grow in Palestine,—long, sharp, and thick-set.

Is it necessary, here, to make the apology of the Chapel of Saints? to tell why, and how, we honor the friends of God, the champions and defenders of the Faith? and, when they have gone to their recompense, how we love to have some memento of them, some souvenir to recall

them to mind, with the thought of the heaven where they are rewarded, and where we finally hope one day to dwell with them ?

It is a sentiment so natural that we all practise the devotion to relics, when there is question of friends or relatives. Not many years ago, the grateful countrymen of Washington, bore in a procession, a lock of his hair, as a trophy of which they might be proud, and were not afraid of being called superstitious. Our shrines and reliquaries enclose similar objects, and we venerate them with a kindred feeling, heightened by the knowledge of favors granted by Heaven, on more than one occasion, to those who thus honor them "whom God delights to honor." It is a feeling similar to that which renders the Catacombs sacred, or makes the soil of the arena within the crumbling Coliseum, seem holy ground.

Yes ! when the first twilight shades are descending, after that plaintive anthem of the Vesper-Office ; "*In manus tuas Domine,*

etc. "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit,"—one loves to kneel in that little sanctuary where repose so many memorials of those that have given their soul to God in peace. And when, at earliest dawn, one enters there, remembering those who like the Psalmist could say: *Ad te de luce vigilo*—"To thee, O Lord, have I watched from the earliest light of day," the soul will ever be refreshed, and prepared for the sacred hour of morning prayer. Nor is it less salutary to bring to mind, that for the last one hundred and fifty years, every nun who has lived in the solitude of the Old Monastery, has often prostrated herself in prayer before that antique statue of Our Lady of Great Power, in this same quiet Chapel.

The ashes of the heroic Foundresses, those of the Venerable Mother, who now awaits the highest honors the Church of God awards to her most faithful children, seem to speak in words of gentle encouragement. Oh! how fervently should each one pray that nothing may ever penetrate within the precincts of the

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Monastery to derogate in the least from the spirit of peace and sanctity which is here so palpably felt.— But there is something here more tangible, even, than the spirit of the place :—there are also

EX-VOTOS.

An Ex-voto ! the word tells of pressing danger and of succor obtained in the moment of peril. It tells of some suffering relieved, for which there was no earthly alleviation to be obtained ; and who has not, at some time, suffered such anxiety, or seen such woe threatening, that there went up to God the deep cry of the heart, which pierced the heavens, and brought speedy help for the hour of need ?

For all who have thus prayed, that little twinkling flame, dimly lighting an ancient sanctuary, has a language ; and they turn to view it again, with more of sympathy than curiosity. If they have read a delicious page in the "*Histoire du Monastère*," under the title of "*La Lampe*

qui ne s'éteint pas," they ask no further explanation. For those who have not, we shall inscribe here the following lines on

THE VOTIVE LAMP.

O twinkling Lamp ! thy feeble ray
Sheds no refulgent glare ;
And yet thou knowest no decay,
Since once—thrice fifty-years away,
Thou first wast, trimmed with care.

Dire was the conflict, when her chains
That maiden sought to break :
Now in her soul triumphant reigns
God's holy love, and now it wanes,—
'Tis earthly flames that wake.

" O Mother, Powerful ! lend thine aid ;
Pity my dire distress !
I've fled me to this cloister's shade ;
Let now all worldly phantoms fade,
If Heaven my project bless."

" Will not the pitying Virgin hear
A suppliant in her need ?
Will she not make my pathway clear,
Sending me grace to persevere,
From all this darkness freed ?"

Lo ! swift descending from on high,
 Peace to her bosom flows ;—
 As swift the gloom and sorrow fly,—
 Her soul in sweet security,
 Forgets its recent throes.

For light so pure in darkest hour,
 A Lamp burns near the shrine
 Where Mary Mother of Great Power,
 Still hears our prayers : and graces shower,
 Where beams so tender, shine.

Now, many circling years have sped
 While yet that tiny flame,
 By gratitude is fondly fed,
 As when at first its light was shed
 Around that high-born dame.

Still does it point the way secure
 To Her, our Queen above ;
 Whose tender bosom, ever pure,
 Pities the woes we may endure,
 And succors us with love.

Come, then, at twilight's pensive hour ;
 Come, in the early dawn !
 Come, when the skies around you lower,
 Come to Our Lady of Great Power,
 Sure Help of the forlorn !

Though titles new, round Mary's name,
 May cluster every year,
 Yet as I view that votive flame,
 Lit by the hand of noble dame,
 I love the more that ancient claim,
 "MOTHER OF POWER" reign here!

Who, then, had lit that tiny Lamp before the shrine of Our Lady of Great Power? that lamp which has flickered and spent daily its little life, to see it perpetually renewed during one hundred and fifty years?—That maiden's name was Miss Marie Madeleine de Repentigny. Her vocation affords an instance of the manner in which God sometimes pursues a soul, rebellious at first, forcing her, as it were, to take place at the "marriage Feast" to which he had long invited her by the voice of his secret inspirations.

The family de Repentigny were among the first of the nobility that came out to settle in the Colony. Mother Mary of the Incarnation makes mention of them with eulogium, writing in 1664. The daughters were always to be found

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among our boarders: Marie-Madeleine had her turn from the age of about ten years, till her education was considered to be in accordance with her rank and position in society.

On leaving the Convent, she had not like many others, formed to herself any fixed plan of life, and she soon found herself surrounded with those temptations that often beset the pathway of a young girl on her entrance into the world.

Gay parties of pleasure, frivolous amusements, idle conversations, filled up the precious hours from day to day, leaving her little time for reflection, serious reading, or prayer. The prestige of rank, wit and beauty on the one side, that of merit, politeness and noble demeanor on the other, soon resulted in the preliminaries of an alliance, which appeared advantageous in the eyes of the world; and which met the approbation of Marie Madeleine's parents, as well as those of the young officer, who was a relative. On such occasions, when all seems so bright in the fu-

ture, who thinks of seriously consulting to know the will of God ?

Suddenly the young officer is called away on duty. Alas ! for the fallacious promises of earthly happiness,—the next news is of his death !

To the violent grief and mourning of the first months, succeeds an attempt to dissipate this irksome gloom of mind, by plunging anew into the vortex of worldly pleasures.

But the kind hand of Providence was still extended, waiting the moment to reclaim this prodigal child, and reconduct her to a mansion of peace and security. At one of the churches in the city, an eloquent and zealous Jesuit was giving the exercises of a retreat, for young ladies. Marie-Madeleine went with the rest, but soon found that the Sacred Orator was preaching—so it seemed to her—for her alone:—

“What will it avail a man to gain the whole world, and yet to lose his own

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soul, or what shall he give in exchange for his soul?"

These solemn words of our Blessed Lord sank deep into her soul, and she then perceived that there had been a void in her heart, which the vanities of the world had never been able to fill. But long habits of self indulgence, the enervating influence of ease, and the servitude of fashion, do not impart energy to the will, nor consistency to the character. Marie-Madeleine hesitates still, when, behold the merciful hand that pursue her, raises an impediment to her vanity, in an accident almost imperceptible,—yet efficacious.

The swelling of a gland in her throat threatens to mar her beauty. She consults an experienced friend and learns that it is not dangerous in itself, but may become so, if healed. She is thus led to serious thought:—the future seems to stand before her, with its chances. She takes times for reflection, and, at last, beginning to perceive the designs of Pro-

vidence, she resolves to correspond to them. After due consultation, she solicits admission into the Novitiate of the Ursulines. The nuns, remembering her many good qualities, willingly accept her.

But all is not yet settled between herself and God. She has long been rebellious to grace;—that grace now demands a restitution; the homage of a will subdued by suffering the assaults of its own inconstancy.

No sooner had she reached the Convent, than she began to experience the torments of doubt and perplexity. “Was she truly called? Had she strength to embrace the austerities of the cloister?”—

She overcomes this first temptation generously, conscious that a passing feeling of repugnance, is no proof that she is not in the path of duty. Once in the Novitiate, the trial disappears for a time: later it returns with such violence that the Convent seems to her as irksome as it had appeared delightful.

But Marie-Madeleine, now Mother St.

Agatha, had learned the force of prayer. She takes refuge at the feet of Mary. She calls upon her as the Mother of Mercy, the Virgin Most Powerful,—and is heard. The clouds have rolled back from her soul, that now basks in the effulgence of joy !

Confirmed, henceforth, in her vocation; grateful for the protection of Heaven, she begs permission to found a perpetual memento of the grace, the invisible *light* she has received. Her own life, cheerful, courageous, mortified, during the twenty years she had yet to spend within the Monastery, was another light, rejoicing her companions more than the *Votive Lamp* which she daily trimmed with sentiments, ever fresh, of piety and gratitude.

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CHAPTER XV.

1672-1739.

STATE OF EDUCATION IN THE CONVENT.

In picturing the Monastery at any period, we must surround it with that interesting portion of humanity, joyous, careless, ingenuous youth.

For the sake of these lambkins of the fold of Christ, the cloister of the Ursulines is not as strict as in the contemplative Orders. The conventual door opens as readily to the appeal of children to be instructed, as if it had not a double lock: the welcome that awaits a pupil is as warm, the greeting as tender, as if the inmates of the Convent were the household friends of her infancy.

The name of *Mother*, which she is allowed to bestow on those who are receiving her with open arms, tells the measure of love she may expect; the

amount of care and solicitude she may claim as her right. For the Spouse of Jesus remembers the word of Him, who once took little children in his arms and blessed them, saying: "Let little children come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven: "Whosoever receiveth one of these little ones in my name, receiveth me." Far from regarding the duties of a teacher as irksome, she rejoices in them; and esteems no employment more sweet and honorable, than that of forming the youthful heart to piety, and storing the tender mind with useful knowledge: convinced that she is thus contributing, most certainly, to the welfare and happiness of society.

The Boarding-School, like the Community, is a little commonwealth in itself, with its own statutes, privileges, and immunities. The "Local Government," nominated by the Superioress, is composed of a General Mistress, with her *staff* of Teachers and Aids,—as many as may be required for the intellectual, the

spiritual, and the physical wants of the pupils.

It is the General Mistress, for instance, who welcomes the little stranger as she enters, and dries the tears that will come when we say *adieu* to fond parents for the first time ; it is she who comforts the trembling child with gentle words, and conducts her to the Chapel, near by, to ask the blessing of God on her sojourn in the Monastery. Then, the same maternal hand, after weighing the little stock of knowledge the new pupil may already possess, guides her to the class to which she will belong, continuing, as the year advances, to note her progress by the Report of the different Teachers : for the General Mistress is entrusted with the *Porte-Feuille* ; she distributes the certificates, and is responsible to the parents. In short, she is the intermediary of authority, maintaining that of the subordinate mistresses, and applying to the Superior in all cases beyond the limits of her own jurisdiction. Thus, as the Apostle has advised, "all things are settled in

order, that all being of one mind and living in union, the God of peace and love may be with his servants."

Our little pupil is soon at home in the Convent; and, passing from the classrooms, where the toil of learning is sweetened by the kindness of the teacher, to the refectory where she is served with love; to the recreation-hall, or the playgrounds, where innocent sports make the hour pass only too swiftly, she forgets the sadness of the parting scene, at the conventual door.

Then, as the months roll on, the good seed, destined to produce ten or a hundred fold, is gradually sown:—the love of God; the fear of offending Him; respect for authority; fidelity to order and duty; habits of virtue and self-government: such is the basis which the conscientious teacher seeks to lay, broad and deep, when laboring to form the character of her youthful charge.

In the early part of the eighteenth century, which is the period we are about

to consider, the Course of Studies in our Convent-school, was the same as that followed in the Mother-House in Paris; the Ursulines of Quebec having adopted, with the Constitutions of that Congregation, their Rules for the educational department. The *curriculum* embraced Reading and Grammar; Arithmetic and Penmanship; Religious Instruction, including Sacred History; with occasional recitations in prose and verse, to impart a taste for reading, as well as to ornament the memory and improve the mind. Dramatic dialogues on moral or pious subjects, Pastorals, or complimentary apologues on anniversary occasions, were held in esteem, as a means of forming the pupils to grace of manners, and that degree of modest assurance which is so becoming, yet so difficult to attain in youth.

Embroidery, in its various styles, and needle-work in general, received great attention, as well as domestic economy.

Such a course, announced in the Prospectus of an Educational Institution at

the present day, would excite surprise and be declared positively too elementary. Yet we may be allowed to doubt, whether any system of modern education can be found that does greater justice to the recipient of it, than the old training did; the chief object of which seems to have been to prepare the mind for the great object of life:—that of living well, and performing well the duties of one's state of life.

When we can name such women as Madame de Maintenon, and many other distinguished ladies of her time; when we see a Marchioness of Vaudreuil, a pupil of our Convent, called (1709) without any further preparation, to fill the office of sub-governess to princes of the royal line of Bourbon; when we have read the lives, and the writings of many of our ancient nuns: we cannot but admit that there are reasons for not depreciating the old system of education in Convents.

Zeal for the education of their children is one of the honorable traits of the

early settlers of Canada ; " many of whom would never have crossed the Ocean to New France," so they assured Father Lejeune, " if they had not been certain of finding there, persons able to guide their consciences in the care of their salvation, as well as to instruct their offspring in virtue and learning." In this respect as Le Clerc says, " Canada was more fortunate than new settlements in other parts of the world."

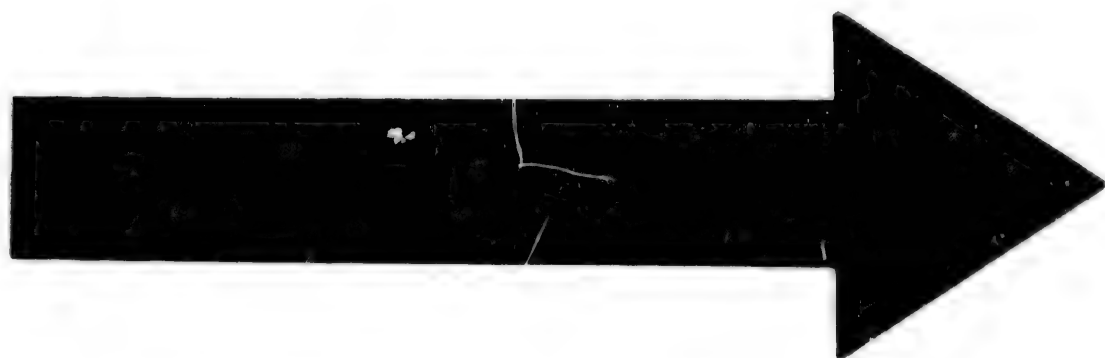
It is not, therefore, surprising, that our lists show the prominent names of the country, from one generation to another ; those of lesser note come, also, intermingled, while the Day-school or Externat provided for the religious instruction and primary education of all classes, rich and poor, in the city.

Terms for board were always moderate, and our good Mothers accomodating. Money being rare in the Colony, payments were made in goods and provisions, sometimes in wood for fuel, or in materials for building ; and not unfrequently from the alms-box of the Monastery, or

from the sums occasionally furnished by the French Government.

The best families were often not less in need of concessions and "favors," than the poorer class ; for, if the latter having to labor for their subsistence, were dependant on "wind and weather," a fine season or a good harvest ; the former had to reckon with the casualties of the Ocean, or the accidents of war, and the *certainties* of an inadequate salary.

As to the number of pupils frequenting the Day-school, or residing in the Convent as boarders, our ancient mothers seem to have left to the good Angels who assembled them, the care of counting and comparing one year with another. Lists are often without date ; the Registers, held by different hands, are incomplete, or defaced ; moreover, that epoch of renovation and reckoning, the Vacation, being unknown, there were pupils entering or leaving throughout the year, without any obligation or motive for presenting a *total*, for any given period.



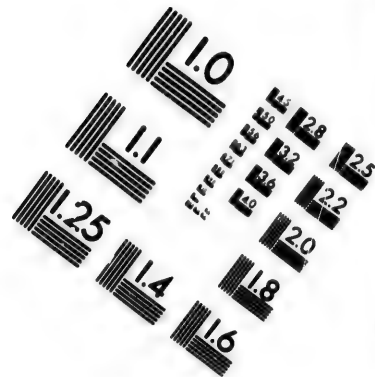
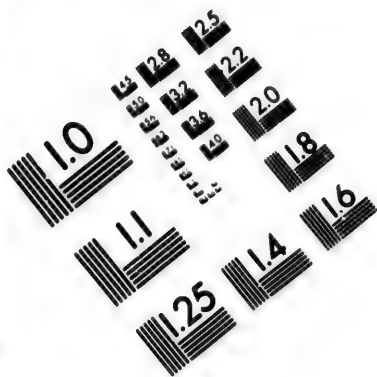
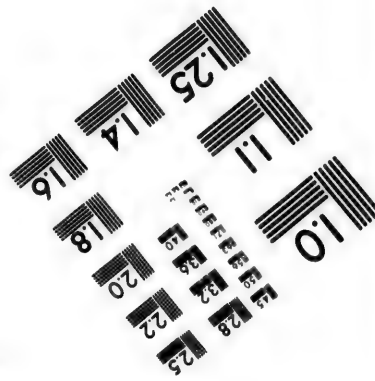
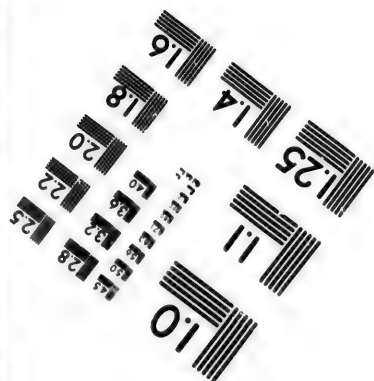
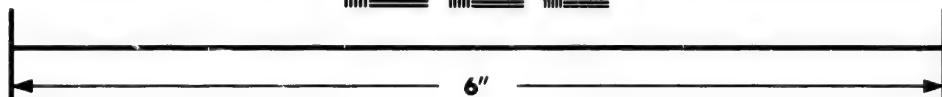
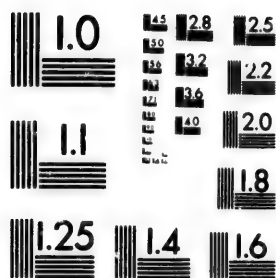


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If the Annals state that there were, in such a year, "sixteen little communicants," or "twenty" on another occasion, it is not in order to enumerate, but to record a trait of benignity of their chief Pastor, who, "addresses the dear children a moving exhortation, and communicates them, as well as the nuns, from his own hand." Or the good Bishop is present on a Passion-Sunday, and witnesses a little *action* in honor of the mystery, at which "he manifests his entire satisfaction." When, at the beginning of the century, there is a terrible epidemy, and thirty-seven of the boarders are ill at one time, the Annalist records the fact; but she does not tell us how many escaped the malady, only that the classes were suspended for want of teachers.

We see that from year to year, there is a gradual increase; new classes are formed; new class-rooms provided. The "Monastery enlarged" (1717), has shown us the whole building, adjoining the parlors, occupied by the boarders.

A class of little Indian girls continued

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till about the year 1725. The extern-school was, at all times, formerly, far more numerous than that of the boarders.

Some of the pupils entered the Convent very young, and remained seven or eight years; generally, they came at the age of ten or eleven, to be prepared for their first Communion—remaining from two, to four or five years. The biographies of the nuns have enabled us to form these estimates; and to observe, at the same time, that a young girl of fourteen or fifteen was able to give proof of a maturity of judgment, and a decision of mind, which at the present day, we hardly expect at eighteen. The phenomenon may not be easy to explain; but it must be admitted.

Could we now follow in spirit, through the devious paths of life, some of these ancient pupils; could we consult family records, as we have passed in review those of the cloister, it would complete, in a satisfactory manner, our appreciation of the value, and the effects of education in the eighteenth century.

When as competent a judge as Rev. Father Charlevoix, tells us, in 1720, "of a total absence of rusticity throughout the country;" that he found the colonists "most respectable for their probity, their candor and solid piety," we naturally attribute no small share of the merit to the good religious instruction the mothers of these families had received. Who knows not the influence of the mother, on the rising generation? Who can doubt the truth of the aphorism of the old Bretons, upon which the ancient settlers of Canada seem to have acted: "It is better to *instruct* a little child than to gather wealth for him." We might fancy we hear one of those good Christian mothers, imparting to her offspring the lessons of piety she had learned at the Convent, in language as simple and sweet, as in the following song of the blind minstrel Herve, the monastic bard of Armorica:—

"Approach my little children; come and hear a new song which I have composed expressly for you: take pains to remember it entirely.

"When you awake in your bed, offer your heart to the good God, make the sign of the Cross, and say with faith, hope, and love :

"Say : my God, I give thee my heart, my body and my soul ; make me to be a good man, or else to die before my time.

"When you see a raven fly, think that sin is as black and wicked ; when you see a little white dove fly, think that your soul, if pure, is as sweet and white."

Oh ! happy the child that has a good mother. Never will her lessons of piety, her examples of virtue be totally effaced from the mind !

Let us now take a specimen of the names that occur on our lists, beginning by Miss Jeanne Le Ber, the admirable Recluse of Montreal. The piety of Jeanne, her tender love of God, and her desire to imitate the Child of Nazareth, in simplicity, in silence, in labor and humility, were manifest; even at the age of eleven and twelve, when she was an inmate of the convent, in 1675. She found compan-

ions of her fervor in such young ladies as the Misses Denis, — des Granges, — St. Amand, — Neveu, — La Forge, — Nolan, — Marie and Margaret Le Gardeur, — Marie Berthelot, — Angelique de Lauson, &c.

Taking up the list at another date, we meet with the name of Miss Marie-Josephine Fezeret, followed by the three Misses des Meloises, the two Misses Ville-donné ; Margaret Gravelle, etc.

Miss Fezeret affords us a noble example of energy and filial piety. Returning to her home in Montreal at the age of seventeen, she finds her family plunged in the deepest affliction ; her three brothers had fallen in battle where they had hoped to win glory and fortune ; her aged parents, left without resource, were disheartened and overwhelmed with the weight of their misfortunes. Miss Fezeret, far from adding to the afflictions of her family by her own despondency, exerts herself to find, at least, a remedy for the indigence that threatened them. She draws up a petition to present to the Governor

to obtain a grant of lands, "with all seigniorial rights," pleading the losses her family had sustained "in the King's service," and their present necessities, with such ability that she gains her cause in its full extent. The Marquis de Vaudreuil assigns to the young claimant, in due form, a remnant of ungranted lands to which he gives the name of Bourg-Marie, under the title of fief and seigniory, "subject to fealty and homage to be rendered at the Castle of St. Louis in Quebec."

Miss Fezeret was destined to enjoy the blessing of surrounding the declining years of her aged parents with joy and comforts, — happy especially, in having nobly fulfilled a noble duty. Her subsequent marriage with an officer of the marine, M. de Thiersant, seems to have been equally blessed by Heaven. The name of Mrs. Thiersant, found among the few who in ancient times obtained the privilege of "Parlor boarder" (*pensionnaire en chambre*) proves that she never forgot her Convent-mothers, nor the clois-

ter where she had spent her younger years.

Returning to our lists, we write with pleasure the name of Miss C. Aubert de la Chesnaye, one of the ancestors of the family De Gaspé, whose descendants occur at all dates down to the present day;—the Misses de Chavigny,—de la Gorgendière,—de Beaulieu,—de la Tesserie;—with the names equally ancient of Le Moine,—des Groseilliers,—de la Garenne,—de Bécancourt,—Migeon de Bransac,—Bolduc,—du Puy,—Landron,—Picard,—Joly, etc;

Among the companions of the young captive, Esther Wheelwright, (1709) we may notice the daughter of the Governor her protector, Miss Elizabeth de Vaudreuil, placed the Convent, at the same time;—and, in their company, Misses Anne Denis de St. Simon, Charlotte Le Gardeur,—Couillard,—d'Ailleboust des Musseaux,—du Menil,—Duchesnay,—Roy, etc. etc.

In 1712, the Monastery was edified by

the youthful virtues of Miss Margaret du Frost de la Gesmerais, better known to our readers by the name of Madame d'Youville; who after experiencing the bitter vicissitudes of life, constituted herself the servant of the poor, the maimed, and the sick; triumphing over misfortune by the cheerful practice of the works of mercy, and endowing her country with that noble institution, bearing the time-honored name of *Sœurs-Grises*, or Sisters of Charity.

Contemporary with the heroic example of Miss de la Gesmerais,¹ we find the admirable charity of the three daughters of the ancient Governor of Montreal, the Misses De Ramesay. The six amiable

¹ Miss de la Gesmerais was daughter of a distinguished officer who served under the Marquis de Denonville: her Mother was Miss René de Varennes. Several of her relatives were Ursulines;—her three aunts were the Mothers Varennes de la Presentation; du Muy de Ste. Hélène; Anne-Marie de Boucherville de St. Ignace: the Rev. Mother Boucher, de Boucherville de St. Pierre was her grand-aunt.

sisters had passed through our classes, to the mutual satisfaction of teachers and pupils. The eldest, after a brief sojourn in her family, had returned to Quebec, and entered the General Hospital, where she lived nearly half a century, serving with angelic piety the suffering members of our Lord, for the sake of his love. The second, Marie-Catherine, bade a cheerful adieu to the enjoyments her position in society promised her, to become an Ursuline; Geneviève, the third had accepted an alliance in the world.

The three youngest remained in their family, leading a life worthy of the cloister. Their chief delight was to succor the indigent, to visit and comfort the sick; being ever ready to expose their health, or to endanger their life, if thereby they might procure relief for the distressed, or minister to the corporal or spiritual necessities of the dying.

One instance will suffice to show how they understood and practised the precept of charity.

In 1735, the city of Montreal was visited by a violent and fearful epidemy. The Hospitals were soon filled with the sick and the dying. Nine of the Hospital Sisters had fallen victims to the cruel malady, when by the interference of the ecclesiastical and the civil authority, limits were set to the devotedness of the worthy nuns. The remainder of the Community, were ordered to quit the cloister and the city, in order to breathe the pure air in the country; six, only, were excepted, and these offered the sacrifice of their lives, in order to continue serving the unfortunate sufferers in the Hospital.

At this moment of terror and general consternation, the Miss de Ramesay did not abandon their usual post by the sick-bed. Knowing that the worst cases of the malady were assembled in the Hospital, they hastened to offer their services to aid the nuns in their sublime act of charity, stipulating the following conditions in their own favor, namely : to have a place in

the Hospital, should they be attacked by the disease; and to be buried in the Chapel of Our Lady of Good Help—the cemetery of the nuns,—in case of death.

We must add that by a reciprocal act of generosity their offer was not accepted;—but who can doubt of the recompense it obtained in the sight of Him who esteems and rewards the will for the deed?

Let us take a few more names, selecting from the list published in the *Histoire du Monastère*, for the year 1722. There is mention of a little pupil's death, at the age of six years: the innocent child had her last resting place in the cemetery reserved to the nuns, beneath the choir. She was the youngest of the three Misses Begon, who were all in the Convent that year,—the daughters of the Intendant M. Begon, Captain and Knight of St. Louis. The list reads on as follows:—Misses Françoise de Lotbinière,—Cartier,—Pugibault,—de Beaujeu,—Térèse d'Aillebout,—Félicite du Chesnay,—Jeanne Pinguet-Vaucours,—Lemieux,—

de la Chevrotière,—de Léry,—Baby,—
de Jonquières,—Duguet,—de Girardin,—
de la Croix,—de Hertel,—Boucher,—de
Niverville,—the Misses Bissot,—St. Ours
Deschaillons,—Bédard,—Davis,—de Beau-
jeu,—Bonneau,—St. Luc de la Corne, etc,
Charlotte d'Anticosti,¹ whose ancestor
Louis Joliet, with Rev. Father Marquette,
discovered the River Mississippi;

Let us mention, for the last time, the
little forest-girls, as boarders, having their
separate class under the title of "*Semin-
ary*." From time to time, even after our
Mothers had ceased to name them in
their vow of instruction (1725), the mis-
sionaries would send some unprotected
child to the Convent, as in earlier days,
but these were no longer little pagans to
be instructed in the Faith. The rem-
nants of the Indian tribes along the

¹ The reader who would see many curious details
of genealogy etc. is referred to the lists published in
the different Volumes of the *Histoire du Monas-
tère*: the extracts printed here are taken from Vol.
2. p. 174. and p. 175.

Lower St. Lawrence, which war and sickness had spared, had embraced Christianity; while their incapacity to adopt the civilization of European nations, had become an acknowledged fact. Henceforth, the devoted priests who continue to labor for the salvation of these natives of the great forests of America, find among them evident traces of a christian Mother's influence; and have less difficulty in instructing them in all that is needful for the service of God. We know that, as a judicious author¹ has remarked, "they often exhibited, by their lives, a simplicity and fervor of intelligent faith, which races, called superior, would do well to emulate."

How far the teaching of young females from these tribes, in the Convent, during a period of eighty years, may have aided the missionary in his God-like task, is only known to the Remunerator of good deeds.

¹ Rev. X. D. MacLeod: Devotion to the B. V. in America, p. 166.

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CHAPER XVI.

ANCIENT SUPERIORS :

MARY, PERPETUAL SUPERIORESS OF THE URSU- LINES.

A Picture Gallery, hung with the portraits of our Ancient Superiors, would not be, for the cloistered Family, the least interesting part of the Monastery.

Placed in their order, after that of the Venerable first Superioress, Mother Mary of the Incarnation, they would now amount to twenty-four;—ten of them belonging to the first centennial period, from 1639 to 1739.

Our readers are already familiar with the names of several of those Mothers, who have been called by Divine Providence "to bear the heat and burden of the day," at the post of chief responsibility, while their sisters enjoyed the enviable privilege, the merit and security

of obedience. It may be said that the Superioress, also, governing with humility and condescension, performs an act of meritorious obedience;—yet how unlike that of the private religious, who, without solicitude or anxiety, makes a peaceful and happy voyage, leaving to the watchful and careworn pilot the charge of guiding the vessel.

The following list will serve as an introduction for the first ten Superiors of the Monastery of Quebec, presenting at the same time an epitome of their services:—

SUPERIORS FROM 1639, to 1739.

1. Ven. Mother Marie Guyart de l'Incarnation :—
Sup. from 1639 to 1645 :—1651 to 1657 :—
1663 to 1669. = 18 years.
2. Rev. Mother Marguérite de Flécelle de St. Athanase :—
Sup. from 1645 to 1651 :—1657 to 1663 :—
1669 to 1676. = 18 years.
3. Rev. Mother Marie Gibault du Breuil—of St Joseph :—

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Sup. from 1676 to 1682 :—1688 to 1694.=
12 years.

4. Rev. Mother Marie Drouet—de Jésus :—

Sup. from 1682 to 1688 :—[also Sup. at
Three Rivers]=6 years.

5. Rev. Mother Marie Le Maire—des Anges ;

Sup. from 1694 to 1700 :—1712 to 1717 [S.
also at Three Rivers]=12 years.

(The following made profession in the Convent
of Quebec).

6. Rev. Mother Marie-Anne Bourdon—of St.
Agnes, Sup. from 1700 to 1703=3 years.

7. Rev. Mother Angélique Poisson—de St. Jean
l'Evangéliste :—

Sup. from 1703 to 1706 :—1717 to 1723 :—
1726 to 1732.=15 years.

8. Rev. Mother Catherine Pinguet—de l'Incar-
nation :—

Sup. from 1706 to 1712.=6 years.

9. Rev. Mother Marie Amiot—de la Concep-
tion,

Sup. from 1732 to 1725,=3 years.

10. Rev. Mother Marie Anceau—de St. Thérèse :—

Sup. from 1723 to 1736 [also 19 years at
Three Rivers]=3 years.

The 11th Superioress elected in 1735, was Rev. Mother Migeon de la Nativité.

REV. MOTHER DROUET — OF JESUS. After the decease of Our Ven. Mother Mary of the Incarnation (1672) and Mother St. Athanasius (1695), the first to pay the debt of nature, among these ancient Superiors, was Mother Marie Drouet—of Jesus, (1709).

She was no longer an inmate of the Convent of Quebec, but at the head of the Ursulines of Three Rivers, a post she had occupied to the entire satisfaction of that little Community for the space of nine years.

During the second term of her Superiority at Quebec, the burning of the Convent, (1686), and the subsequent hardships attendant on the accident, gave her such trials as, happily, but few are called to bear; but her energy, her piety and submission to Divine Providence, rendered her equal to the emergency. Her tender devotion to the mystery of the Infancy of Our Lord, was perhaps the secret of

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the mildness and suavity which characterized her as a Superior, as well as of the meekness and charity which rendered her the perfect religious. She has left us a perpetual legacy of that devotion, in the commemoration of the Saviour's birth, renewed on the 25th of each month, by singing a Hymn and an Anthem, before the Altar dedicated to the Infant Jesus. Mother Mary of Jesus at her death, had attained the age of 75 years,—in religion 57.

REV. MOTHER ANNE BOURDON—OF ST. AGNES.—Two years later (1711), there was mourning for another Ex-Superioress, our beloved Mother Anne Bourdon of St. Agnes, one of the early pupils ¹ of our Venerable Mother Mary of the Incarnation. In the obituary Notice of this good Mother, we perceive a strain of tenderness, unusual even on those pages which ever breathe of charity: "We have lost our *dear and well-beloved* Mother St. Agnes," says the writer. "This good Mother is

¹ See Glimpses. Part 1st, p. 62 and 64.

deeply regretted by all her Sisters, to whom she had greatly endeared herself in every way. The many virtues which adorned her life, the many amiable exterior qualities which distinguished her rendered her a real treasure for our Community.....The close of a peaceful and meritorious life, was in the embrace of the Lord, sweet and holy, leaving us all filled with the desire of imitating the examples she has left us."

Rev. Mother St. Agnes is entitled to the lasting gratitude of our Monastery, particularly by her labors as Annalist. To her faithful pen we owe the summary or Narrative of the first forty-eight years of the history of the Convent, replacing the regular Annals, which had perished in 1686. Once charged with the care of consigning to paper the details of passing events, her discrimination is as remarkable as her style. Her historical narrations, neither too brief, nor yet redundant, are full of vigor and animation.

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her pen, still firm at the age of seventy, although heavier than when she commenced some thirty years previous, is the account of the expedition of the American Colonists against Canada, in 1711, the result of which was still impending, at her decease.

It closes with these words so expressive, and so characteristic of the lively faith of the writer :— "Our enemies trust in their multitude and in their strength; but for us, O Lord, our sole hope is in thy protection."

REV. MOTHER GIBAULT DU BREUIL—OF ST. JOSEPH.—At the decease (1715) of this ancient Superioress, the new Annalist declares she can find no expressions "to give an adequate idea of the merit, the rare qualities, the many virtues of this dear and venerable Mother." She had spent forty-four years in Canada, contributing zealously to the solid establishment of this Convent, to which she had given her services in 1671.

The last year of her life she was enabled

to contribute to its welfare in a manner most crucifying to nature. It was no longer her part to guide others, but she needed the helping hand of kind sisters even to pass from one apartment to another. Blind, and very infirm, she found in the charity of compassionate hearts and in her own complete resignation to the will of Providence, the only alleviation her sufferings admitted. Borne several years, with admirable meekness and patience, these infirmities were the crucible wherein the virtues which Mother St. Josepn had long practised, became as the fine gold purified by fire: she expired, surrounded by the consolations of religion, aged sixty-two.

REV. MOTHER MARIE LE MAIRE OF THE ANGELS.—There was still left one survivor of our beloved French Mothers: her recent re-election to the office of Superioress, at the advanced age of seventy-five, proved in what estimation the Community held Rev. Mother Mary of the Angels.

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We have mentioned already her sol-
citude for the establishment of the Ursu-
lines at Three-Rivers, where she held the
office of Superioress, six years. She had
discharged the same duties here, during
seventeen years, when arrived the peace-
ful close of her useful life, in 1717.
Four times during the autumn of that
year, did the beautiful ceremony of a
Reception rejoice the heart of the aged
Superioress, who congratulated herself,
with reason, on witnessing such a con-
quest of grace as the vocation of Miss de
Ramesay and her companions.

All around the Convent, during that
fall, workmen had been busy laying vast
foundations for a Church;—too vast, un-
fortunately, so that much of the labor
had to be abandoned, and recommenced
on another plan. Mother Mary of the
Angels continued to acquit herself of the
duties that devolved upon her as Su-
perioress, in addition to the cares and
difficulties that attended her in the build-
ing line.

But winter had now set in, and a few days given to a retreat, would be rest for body and mind :—or, was it a presentiment of her approaching dissolution that caused the Venerable Mother to withdraw from her usual occupations, to attend to the grave question of her own progress in perfection? Certainly, no one else foresaw that the Angel of death was hovering near, prepared to strike a blow that would plunge the whole cloistered family in grief. The exercises, commenced with such fervor, were speedily interrupted: Mother Mary of the Angels, seriously ill, became at once the object of the most tender and anxious care; the skill of the best physicians was called in requisition, while the sympathy manifested by the Bishop and clergy, as well as by many of the citizens and their families, showed how they all appreciated the worth of the pious Superioress. The sentiments of the Community, when, after a few days of suffering, a life of piety and zeal was crowned by a happy death, are summed

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up in that concluding line of her eulogium, in the Annals: "God alone can console us for such a loss."

The honorable and much esteemed relatives of Rev. Mother Le Maire of the Angels, are ranked among the benefactors of the Monastery. Their liberality was experienced on many occasions, particularly after the disaster of 1686. Among other acts of beneficence, the Ursulines of the present day must be particularly sensible to their delicate attention, in procuring for the Community the portraits of our Venerable Mother Marie de l'Incarnation and Madame de la Peltrie, after the loss of the original paintings in the second conflagration of the Monastery.

REV. MOTHER ANGELIQUE POISSON—OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST.—How often have we had occasion to remark that when the Divine Master removes a person eminently useful, he has another in reserve to supply her place in the Community, that the work,—*His* work, may suffer no interruption.

Thus it proved when Rev. Mother Angelique Poisson of St. John was selected, to replace the lamented Mother Mary of the Angels (1717).

This seventh Superioress, whose long services in the Community have merited a special return of love and gratitude, was also the *seventh* professed Choir Sister in the Convent of Quebec.

From the Seigniorial Manor of Gentilly, opposite Three Rivers, the youthful Angelique had passed to our Classes, and to the maternal care of our Venerable Mother Marie de l'Incarnation, at the age of eleven, in 1662. The epoch of her first Communion, impressed her heart remarkably with the sweet influences of piety; and the love of God ever afterwards continued to be the ruling principle of her actions. In her studies, her success was assured by her natural talents,—a good memory, taste and judgment. “She was fond of reading, expressed herself with facility in conversation, and still more gracefully in writing.”

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Our prudence of the 19th century stamp, may take alarm when we hear of her exchanging at the age of fourteen years and a half, the title of pupil, for that of candidate for the religious life: at least, after considering her long career, usefully employed in the instruction of youth, and in the government of the Monastery, we must coincide in the opinion of those who were judges on the occasion, and regard her as “a person of rare and precocious intelligence.”

Called by the vote of the Community to fill the place left vacant by the decease of the regretted Mother Mary of the Angels, we have seen her at the age of sixty-six, take the lead in aiding with her own hands in the building of the Church.

She had retained the vigor of the prime of life to the advanced age of eighty-one, and was again at the post of duty, by the voice of election, when a sudden failure of her usual good health obliged her to desist from her ordinary occupations. Reposing at the Infirmary for a few

days, she thought to turn time to good account by making a review of her past life, and sent for her Confessor to confer upon the matter with him, and receive the holy sacrament of penance. His mission was just over; the Conventual door had not closed upon him, when he was recalled in all haste to administer the sacrament of the dying. The dear Mother, in the unutterable peace of a soul just purified by absolution, had time to receive Extreme Unction, when her spirit, as angelic as her name, passed to the bosom of the God she had so faithfully served. Mother Angélique of St. John had celebrated the sixty-second anniversary of her religious profession, when her death occurred, in 1732.

In their grief for so sudden a loss, our Mothers hesitated to proceed, immediately, to the election of another Superioress. The Bishop provided for a delay by appointing another to that office, of his own authority.

REV. MOTHER MARIE ANCEAU—OF ST.
TERESA.

This worthy Mother thus placed at the head of our Community, had but lately returned from Three Rivers, in hopes of resting from the charge which she had long exercised there.

The dear peace of a vocation, had come, when she had so long pursued her studies during nine years, without regretting the parental mansion at Three Rivers, or sighing for the delights which the unknown futurity is wont to promise the youthful imagination. Without returning to the world, which she may be said to have known, like the Hermit of Parnell, only by report, she joined that little band of novices who, in 1672, lost an incomparable Mother-mistress; but who never forgot

a loss, our head, immediately provided for another Superior to that office,

her, nor her instructions. Mother St. Teresa's whole life breathed of innocence, simplicity, and goodness of heart. Skilful with her needle as with her pen; patient, devoted, pious, and laborious; she was eminently qualified for the instruction of youth; and was almost exclusively employed in teaching, until her services, as Superioress, were required at Three Rivers: there, she guided that Community in a most satisfactory manner, during nineteen years.

A few months after her release from that office, which had been imposed upon her anew in our Monastery, as we have seen, she passed peacefully to her eternal repose (1735), at the age of seventy-eight, greatly regretted as she had been much beloved.

Two Ex-Superiors were still living in 1739, at the epoch of the hundredth Anniversary;—Rev. Mother Marie Pinguet—of the Incarnation, and Rev. Marie Amiot—of the Conception: the latter had yet to see the year 1747, and attain

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the age of eighty-five, completing seventy years of religious life. Their names will occur later.

For the present, let us suspend the review of our "Gallery of Portraits," beneath each of which we have inscribed R. I. P.;—for the Ursulines have a Superioress who is not subject to change nor death.

OUR PERPETUAL SUPERIORESS IS

THE IMMACULATE VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF GOD.

In every religious Order, there is a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin. It is with her example in view that, in all Christian ages, so many young maidens have separated themselves from the pretended glories and pleasures of the world ; seeking in vigils, fastings, and humble charity, to render themselves worthy of being numbered in her train.

To the Ursulines, it is a peculiar consolation and privilege to remember, that they are bound by an article of their

Constitutions, "to cultivate a tender devotion to the Mother of God;" and the motive of the precept is, at the same time, an encouragement.—It is "that by her intercession, and especial protection, they may labor more fruitfully to form Jesus-Christ in the hearts of young girls, instilling into their souls her excellent virtues, according to their institute."

Another article of the same code makes the following provisions:—

"In every Convent, the Blessed Virgin shall be especially chosen for first and chief Superioress, which election shall be thus made:

"On the day appointed by the proper authority, all the religious of the Community being assembled in a chapel, wherein shall be placed a statue of Our Lady, holding in her sacred arms the Infant Jesus, they shall invoke the Holy Ghost by singing the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*. Then shall follow some prayer to the Mother of God, and after that the Mother Superior shall place the keys of

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the Convent at the foot of the statue; and, all kneeling, she shall offer her charge, and the Convent, to Our Lady by some devout form of consecration."

This solemn act of homage and fealty which the Superioress is to pronounce, commences in these words:—

"Most-holy and most worthy Mother of God, Queen of heaven and earth, Temple of the most August Trinity, Refuge of sinners and of all who have placed their confidence in thy protection.....Behold us humbly prostrate at thy feet, while we promise in presence of the Blessed Trinity and of all the Court of heaven, to take and hold thee as our special Mother, Queen, and Protectress, beseeching thee from the depths of our hearts, to adopt and protect in a particular manner this Community, as thy possession. We choose and acknowledge thee for our first and chief Superioress, desiring to depend upon thee in the most absolute manner. And I, Sr. N. N., Superioress most unworthy, resign this charge into

thy hands, reserving to myself no right to exercise it but in submission to thee; placing myself and all this House under thy direction and conduct; rendering thee the homage, honor and obedience due to thee from us, in the quality of most loyal subjects and most humbly devoted children."—..... Next is sung the *Nos cum prole pia*, &c. "Do Thou with thy Divine Son, O Virgin most benignant, give us thy blessing." All incline to receive it, and immediately entoning the *Te Deum laudamus*, the Mother Superior advances to *render homage*, by kneeling to kiss the feet of the statue of the Blessed Virgin; all the Community follow, and do so in turn, passing processionally, while the grand old hymn is sung to the end. This act, which recalls so vividly the fealty and homage of feudal times, was made—spontaneous'y it would seem—in the first Convent of Paris, in 1638.

Here, it dates from the year 1650, having been made known to our Ven. Mother Mary of the Incarnation by the two

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and St. Clare.

One who has assisted at the touching ceremony, taking part in it as personally interested, needs not the aid of fancy nor reminiscence, to feel herself deeply moved by the simple pathos of the language, the piety of the scene, and the pathetic accent of the Superioress, who pronounces the form of consecration. She need not picture to herself that first act of homage, just before the conflagration of the Monastery, when the voices of the first foundresses mingled in that hymn of thanksgiving, for favors and trials—past and future,—both being equally the gift of Heaven: nor recall to mind that the same pious sanctuary where she kneels, has witnessed for the past century and a half, the triennial recurrence of the same solemn homage to the Mother of God. All the Ancient Superiors, from the time of the gentle Mother St. John who saw the Chapel first finished, down to the present day, have here successively offered themselves and the Community,

to constitute the rightful inheritance and possession of the Queen of Heaven.

On these occasions, Our Lady of Great Power descends from her loftier pedestal, as if to render herself more accessible to her most loyal and cherished subjects. Her throne is all aglow with lights and decorations. If the splendor dazzle our eyes, let us rest them on the titles of Our Blessed Lady, written in large and gilded characters upon the base of the four pilasters beside the altar :

MARIA, REGINA VIRGINUM :--DIRIGE NOS ! MARIA MATER URSULINARIUM :--PROTEGE NOS ! Yes ! O Queen of Virgins, O Mother of Ursulines ! direct us, protect us, thy children, thy subjects. Succor and defend us, O Mother of Mercy, O Queen of Martyrs ! MARIA, MATER MISERICORDIÆ SUCCURRE NOBIS :--MARIA REGINA MARTYRUM : DEFENDE NOS !

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CHAPTER XVIII.

1739.

THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY.

For the splendor of public worship, the decoration of Altars, and the celebration of religious festivals, the present generation must yield the palm to the past. Reading of these things in the early times in Canada, is like obtaining a glimpse of the middle ages.

The Hundredth Anniversary of the arrival of the Ursulines on this continent of America, was not one of the least of those occasions, when the population of Quebec, uniting in one sentiment, seem, like the first Christians, to have but one heart and one soul. The renovating fervor of the Community at that period, reminds us of the Cenacle, where the disciples of the Lord pray with such ardor that the Holy Ghost descends visibly upon them,

filling them with new zeal for accomplishing the divine mission with which they are entrusted.

A whole year is not too long to prepare for the great day.

But let the Annalist herself, tell us how these things were done.

“To dispose ourselves for the celebration of our Hundredth Anniversary, and in order that it might be for our Community a motive for a more perfect renovation, returning thanks to God for the innumerable benefits bestowed upon the Monastery during the past century, we began our preparations a year beforehand. On the 1st of August, 1738, being assembled in the Chapel to listen to an exhortation on the subject, one of our Rev. Fathers addressed us in a manner well calculated to inspire us with the fervor that animated our ancient Mothers; as well as with their zeal for the instruction of youth, and the conversion of the poor people of these countries, in laboring for which they consumed their lives.

"Penetrated with the liveliest gratitude towards God, we determined to testify it by giving more time than usual to prayer: for this purpose we prolonged nearly all our ordinary pious exercises.

"On Fridays, three were appointed in turn to observe silence, refraining from the usual recreations, and adding several acts of mortification and of other virtues.

"All our young Sisters desired to renew the exercises preparatory to profession, performing them with fervor, in order to draw down upon this house a continuation of the Divine favor. Finally, on the approach of the great solemnity, the 1st of August, 1739, the anniversary of that day on which our worthy Foundresses Madame de la Peltrie, Ven. Mother Marie Guyart de l'Incarnation, Mother Marie de Savonnières de St. Joseph, and Mother Cécile Richer de St. Croix, arrived in Quebec, all the Community entered upon a retreat.

"The renovation of our vows had been postponed until this day, instead of tak-

ing place according to custom, on the second feria after Pentecost.

"All then was in readiness for the commemorative services, had not the sudden decease of an ancient and beloved Mother, obliged us to defer the rejoicings to the Octave. The festivity of our Centennial Anniversary had been announced to the people, with an Indulgence accorded by Our Holy Father, Innocent X., not only for ourselves, but for the people who desired to participate in the celebration. On the day preceding, at noon, the chimes of the Cathedral bells mingled with ours, to announce the festival ; and this was renewed during the three days, with the same solemnity.

The Triduum was opened by the canons of the Cathedral, who did us the honor of coming to celebrate High Mass, Vespers, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, closing the exercises by singing the Te Deum.

"The second festival was solemnized by the clergy from the Seminary, attend-

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ed by their students and ecclesiastics, in a similar manner. The third and last day belonged to the Franciscans

“ All the Fathers came in procession, singing the *Te Deum*, and after celebrating Mass, returned in the same order, to the chimes of the Cathedral bells and ours. The Rev. Fathers of the Society of Jesus, preached on each the three days.

“ Of the alms that were distributed, we need not take note. The Clergy as well as the religious Communities, were entertained at our expense, and to the best of our power. The concourse in our Church was great during the three days; the people being attracted by the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, which commenced at four o'clock in the morning, and ended only at five in the afternoon.

“ The Church, where every thing was fresh and new, was richly decorated without the loan of ornaments, and all was pronounced to be in good taste. The walls, newly finished, were hung with

paintings. In the large grate, six elegant, silvered, mural lamps, each bearing fourteen tapers, were suspended, producing a fine effect. A large chandelier hung in front of the Chapel of the Sacred Heart; and another, bearing also twenty-two tapers, adorned the nave. The number of tapers burning during the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, was four hundred; comprising those of the altar in the choir, which was also brilliantly decorated."

"Between the three statues that ornament the portal of our Church, hung the portraits of our worthy Foundresses, Madame de la Peltrie, Venerable Mother Marie de l'Incarnation, and Mother St. Joseph.

"Beneath the portraits, were inscriptions in poetry, making known a part of their heroic actions. An address to the people was not forgotten, all being placed at a convenient height to be easily read. The frames of the portraits, as well as the Inscriptions, were black, with gilded

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ornaments. Before the Church door, young fir-trees, planted in several rows, presented a pretty sight and afforded an agreeable shade. During these three days, there were constantly priests at the two altars, celebrating the Holy Sacrifice, from four o'clock in the morning till noon. Could we do too much to thank the Almighty for the blessings showered down in such profusion on this House since its first establishment?

"The same motive induced us to sacrifice a part of the silver plate, belonging to the Infirmary, in order to make a Sanctuary Lamp, with which the Church had not yet been furnished.

"The solemnity ended by a High Mass celebrated at the demand of the Indians, who attended it and sang the *Kyrie*, the *Credo*, etc. After mass they pronounced harangues in the parlor to our address.

"On our part, we offered them a good, substantial banquet, to which they did ample honor.

"Not wishing to have our dear de-

ceased Mothers excluded from this festival, we had fifteen masses celebrated for their repose, as well as to thank God for his great mercies over our Community, and to implore their continuation."

Nothing was wanting, then, to render this celebration, a "success" except the presence of the Chief Pastor of the Diocese Bishop Dosquet, who was absent in France, where he had gone to resign the charge he had held since 1733.

One of the Inscriptions reads much as follows :

Behold the Christian heroines advance,
Affronting peril with intrepid glance :
All fearless, braving Ocean's angry wave,
Immortal souls from endless death to save.
And, now One Hundred years have passed away,
Since first these countries hailed the happy day,
When landing, they embrace the cherished soil,
Which they will render fertile by their toil.
They lived Angelic lives ; they loved the Cross ;
They counted every earthly gain as dross ;
They taught the Red-man, and his child, the road
That leads to that bright world, now their abode.
And every Christian maid, or Mother, here,
Blesses the day when Ursulines appear,

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To train the youthful mind; to guard from ill,
And teach them life's high destiny to fill.—
All honor, then to those who led the way!
Nor if beneath the Convent roof to day,
So many souls are laboring for Heaven,
All glory to the Foundresses be given!
Grant, thou, O Lord, that blessings may increase
From age to age, around this House of peace!
And let it flourish, like a goodly vine,
For 'tis thine own! let all its fruit be thine!

Another inscription takes the form of
an Epigram; and both are evidently fur-
nished by pens beyond the enclosure of
the Monastery:—

One hundred years this House has stood,
Yet all within is firm and good:—
Without reform the charter stands,
Thus let it pass to younger hands;
For where no rotten wood is found,
It kills the tree to bark it round.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1739.

THE SECOND MOTHER MARY OF THE INCARNATION, AND MOTHER ST. CROIX.

At the dawn of the Centennial year of 1739, the Community was composed of fifty-three professed nuns; fifty-three others, during that period of a hundred years, had passed to a better life.

The family above, was, therefore, already as large as that which was preparing the festive celebration here below; and doubtless there were rejoicings also in that better world.

A fresh accession to their number in the course of the year,—a deputation, one would say, from the Community on earth to that in heaven, presents a curious coincidence of names, at such an epoch.

Our readers all remember those three first nuns whose *arrival* illustrates the

date, 1639; the Ven. Mothers Mary of the Incarnation, St. Croix, and St. Joseph. The *departure* of three others of nearly the same name, marks the obituary list, in 1739:—the first was Mother *Marie de Repentigny* of St. Agatha, who although she bore not the same religious name, had like Mother *Marie de la Troche* of St. Joseph, lived about the same number of years in religion. The second death that occurred, interrupted the centennial celebration. It was Mother Marie-Catherine Pinguet *of the Incarnation*; the third was Mother Marie-Elizabeth D'Ailleboust *of St. Croix*.

Madame de la Peltrie had also her representative, in one of the boarders, Miss des Meloises, who died in the Convent, at the age of twelve years; and, by a rare exception, was buried in the cemetery of the nuns.

The last pages of this little Volume, shall, with pleasure, be dedicated to the memory of the two venerable Mothers, whom we might call the *witnesses* of all that it has described.

Who then was this aged Mother Marie-Catherine of the Incarnation, who after a year's preparation to celebrate the great Anniversary, contenting herself with the renovation of her vows with her Community, and sharing the spiritual rejoicings of the 1st August, 1739, hastens to join the choirs above, before the public festival takes place ?

The faithful pen of the olden times tells us that just near Quebec, on the Island of Orleans, a bright and happy home awaited Marie-Catherine as she left the Convent, in 1675, at the age of fourteen : but its attractions were not so strong, nor so sweet, as were those of an interior voice, calling her to a life of separation from the world, and all its pleasing, but fallacious prospects. Her generous-hearted Christian parents had already, some ten years previous, consented to see themselves deprived of the company of their eldest daughter, Marie-Madeleine, who had consecrated herself to God among our Ursulines. Could they now resist the plead-

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ings of Marie-Catherine? They might have objected that her health was delicate, and her frame of the most fragile mould; but the fervor of the youthful aspirant anxious only to obey Him, who is the Master of our destiny, overcame all obstacles.

The Novitiate was opened to her, and doubtless she had reason to write to her parents in such words as the following : ¹

“No language can paint the peace and happiness of mind I enjoy. Fear not for me; I shall continue to be happy, for I have *given myself without reserve to God and his holy Church.*” The months of probation passed quickly by, and the approach of a great day, filled the fervent novice with new joy.

We have witnessed—in spirit—on the 30th April, 1677, the ever touching ceremony of *Taking the Veil*, when, with the livery of the Spouse of Christ, she received the venerated and beloved name of Marie de l’Incarnation.

¹ Life of Archbishop Spalding; Student life in Rome.

The future career marked out for that delicate young novice, was a sealed book before her, as it is for us all. Her only care was to accomplish from day to day, with cheerful heart, the Rule she had embraced, which is an epitome of the Gospel precepts of perfection; conforming her will to that of Divine Providence, in the various trials, and even hardships which awaited her on more than one occasion, in common with the rest of the Community.

After many years devoted to the care and instruction of the pupils in the Boarding-school, she was called to exercise, during six years, the charge of Superioress; and, at various times, that of Assistant, Zelatrix, or Mistress of Novices. The Novitiate must have derived the greatest benefit from the direction of a person, endowed with such prudence, meekness and piety; and we observe that she was re-appointed to that important office, even at an advanced age in the last years of her life. These are the principal services our second Mother of the Incar-

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munity. Were they not sufficient to jus-
tify her in the choice of her vocation?—
and also to justify Divine Providence in
calling her to abandon the paternal man-
sion, where she had indeed a pleasant
home, but subject like all the others on
the face of the wide world, to change,
to sorrow, and to the gradual dissolving
of its tenderest ties by death.

At length, the summons to quit her
adopted family of the cloister, came; but
she was not to know the grief of a part-
ing scene; nor the dread of that last
hour, so terrible, even to the just. A
slight indisposition—so it seemed—a
sudden prostration of her strength, which
had caused her to lose consciousness for
a few moments, during the night of the
1st of August, retained the venerable re-
ligious in the Infirmary, all the next day:
but without any definite pain, fever, or
other alarming symptom. It was a Sun-
day, the 2d of August: the celebration of
the centennial jubilee by the public, was

to take place on Monday. In the mean time, as evening came on, there was a sudden alarm within the Monastery. Their venerated Mother of the Incarnation had sunk, as in a swoon, into her arm-chair, to which she had walked from her bed. She seemed to be dying: yet the physician who had been sent for, in the course of the day, had found her in no danger.

In a few moments she had passed away, all gently, as the ripened leaf in autumn glides from its stem and descends silently to the ground.

It was a death unlooked for,—but not unprepared: and although it changed the accents of thanksgiving to those of mourning, yet each one felt that it was the angel of mercy that had snapped the silver thread of life, just as it was brightest in the sight of Heaven!

On the 4th of September, the Annalist writes again with tears:—

“The Almighty who has decreed that perfect happiness shall never be ours in

this life, has permitted the rejoicings of our Hundredth Anniversary to be followed by redoubled afflictions, in the sudden death of another of our venerable ancient Mothers. But yesterday our beloved Mother Marie-Elizabeth d'Ailleboust of St. Croix, was apparently in perfect health. She had served at table in the refectory all the week; she assisted at the recreation, and at the Divine office with us last evening; this morning, at four o'clock, the Sister who awakens the Community, entering her cell, found her at the point of death,—speechless and, apparently, unconscious. The physician was sent for in all haste, as well as our Confessor. They found her dying. She had merely time to receive a last absolution, and Extreme Unction, when she gently breathed her last. It is impossible to say what had caused her death, the physician finding no mark of apoplexy nor any other known malady."

Our readers have recognized in the family name of our beloved Mother St. Croix, that of the third Governor of the

Colony; she was his grand niece. Her father was Charles d'Ailleboust, Seigneur des Masseaux; and her mother, Miss Catherine Le Gardeur de Repentigny. They have also called to mind, that they assisted, in spirit, at the ceremony of her Reception, in 1689,—in the temporary Chapel, beneath the present Community-Hall.

Her contemporaries tell us how she bore, for fifty years, with happiness, the sweet yoke of the Lord, serving him in a spirit of love, and with so lively a faith in his presence that her whole exterior bore its impress. The remembrance of the Sacred Mysteries of the Passion of Our Saviour, possessed her soul to such a degree, that she had learned to disregard her own sufferings; while his Cross had given her the secret of voluntary humiliations. Providence favored her pious inclinations, by appointing her often to those duties which had to be performed chiefly in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar; as that of Sacristine, and of Mistress of Ceremonies at

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the Divine Office, where her magni-
cent voice found its mission in leading
the choir, and chanting the praises of God.
"To this true daughter of the Church the
least of its ceremonies was sacred; and to
see her take holy water or make the sign
of the Cross, was enough to convince the
beholder that she was penetrated with a
lively faith." Was it not a recompense of
her devotion to the Sacred Heart to be
called to appear before the Divine tribu-
nal on that first Friday of the month?
the day on which she had sung for so
many years that touching hymn: "*O Cor
amoris Victima*. O Heart of Jesus, Victim
of love! be thou my protection in all the
tribulations and sorrows of life! above
all, at the hour of my death, say thou to
my soul: Behold! I am thy salvation!"

In the view of a life so peaceful and consoling in its course, as at its close, we take leave, for a time, of our beloved ancient Mothers; presenting our Readers with a list of their names, at the epoch of the first Centennial anniversary.



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TABLE

Of the Professed Nuns of the Ursuline Convent, Quebec ; from 1639 to 1739.

Year of arrival in Canada.	FROM FRANCE.	Year of decease,	Age.
1639	1. VEN. MÈRE MARIE GUYART DE		
Aug. 1st.	L'INCARNATION, [TOURS.]	1672	71
idem.	2. Rév. Mère Marie de la Troche		
	de Savonnières de <i>St. Joseph</i> ,		
	[Tours]	1651	34
idem.	3. Rév. Mère Cécile Richer de <i>Ste.</i>		
	<i>Croix</i> [Dieppe]	1687	78
1640	4. Rév. Mère Anne le Bugle de <i>Ste.</i>		
July 14.	<i>Cluire</i> , [Paris]	1677	65
idem.	5. Rév. Mère Margaret de Fleccl-		
	les de <i>St. Athanase</i> , [Paris] . . .	1695	81
1644	6. Rév. Mère Anne de <i>Ste. Cécile</i> ,		
July 14.	[Tours]	Returned to France, 1656	
idem.	7. Rév. Mère Anne des <i>Séraphins</i> .		
idem.	8. Rév. Mère Anne Le Boue de		
	<i>Notre Dame</i> , [Tours]	1680	60
1657	9. Rév. Mère Marie de Villiers, de		
July, 14.	<i>St. André</i> [Magny]	1683	52
1671	10. Rév. Mère Marie Gibault du		
Sept. 19.	Breuil, de <i>St. Joseph</i> , [Bour-		
	ges]	1715	80
idem.	11. Rév. Mère Marie Drouet de		
	<i>Jesus</i> [Bourges]	1709	71
idem.	12. Marie Le Maire des <i>Anges</i> ,		
	[Paris]	1717	77
1697	Rév. Mère Marie Le Vaillant de		
Sept 7.	Vocelles de <i>St. Cécile</i> (from		
	Bayeux)	1699	57

242 TABLE OF THE PROFESSED NUNS.

PROFESSED IN QUEBEC.			Year of de- cease.	Age.
Entered the Novitiate.	[This mark * signifies,—living at the Cen- tennial anniversary, Aug. 1st., 1739.]			
1647	13.	Rév. Mère Charlotte Barré de <i>St. Ignace</i>	1701	81
1648	14.	“ “ Philippe de Boulogne de <i>St. Dominique</i> ..	1667	64
1652	15.	“ “ Marie Geneviève Bour- don, de <i>St. Joseph</i>	1700	61
1658	16.	“ “ Anne Bourdon de <i>St.</i> <i>Agnès</i>	1711	67
1658	17.	“ “ Marie Boutet, de <i>St.</i> <i>Augustin</i>	1701	58
1659	18.	“ “ Jeanne Louise Gode- froy de <i>St. Frs. Xavier</i>	1713	68
1665	19.	“ “ Marie Angélique Pois- son de <i>St. Jean l'E-</i> <i>vangeliste</i>	1732	81
1667	20.	“ “ Agnès Duquet de la <i>Nativité</i>	1702	54
1667	21.	“ “ Marie Madeleine Pin- guet de <i>l'Assomption</i> .	1721	69
1667	22.	“ “ Marie Charlotte Gode- froy du <i>St. Sacrement</i>	1720	70
1668	23.	“ “ Marie Le Ber de <i>l'A-</i> <i>nonciation</i>	1714	72
1668	24.	“ “ Marie Madeleine de Lauzon de <i>St. Charles</i>	1731	79
1675	25.	“ “ Angélique de Lauzon du <i>St. Esprit</i>	1732	70
1676	26.	“ “ Marie Catherine Pin- guet de <i>l'Incarnation</i> *	1739	77
1677	27.	“ “ Marie Madeleine Amiot de la <i>Conception</i> * ...	1747	85

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te Gode-	1720	70
crement		
de l'A-	1714	72
.....		
eine de	1731	79
Charles		
Lauzon	1732	70
.....		
ine Pin-	1739	77
nation*		
ne Amiot	1747	85
on * ...		

Entered the Novitiate.	PROFESSED IN QUEBEC.	Decease.	Age
1676	28. Rév. Mère Marie Anne Anceau de Ste. Thérèse	1735	75
1683	29. " " Marie Bouteville de Ste. Claire	1705	37
1684	30. " " Catherine Juchereau des Séraphins	1722	54
1688	31. " " Marie Elizabeth d'Ail- leoust de Ste. Croix ..	1739	70
1688	32. " " Louise-Rose de la Naudière, de Ste Ca- therine *	1748	75
1689	33. " " Marie-Anne Robineau de la Ste. Trinité * ...	1743	72
1689	34. " " M. Madeleine Gauthier de Comporté, de Ste. Agathe	1703	29
1689	35. " " M. Mad. Drouard de St. Michel *	1756	81
1689	36. " " Jeanne Chorel de Ste. Ursule *	1745	71
1692	37. " " M. Françoise Chorel du Sacré Cœur de Jésus.	1735	59
1693	38. " " Anne-Marie Gauthier de Comporté de St. Gabriel.	1732	54
1693	39. " " Angélique Roberge de St. Marie *	1750	72
1693	40. " " Marie Dupuy de l'En- fant Jésus	1703	24
1698	41. " " Marie-Geneviève Bou- cher de St. Pierre * ..	1766	89
1699	42. " " Marie Françoise Her- tel de St. Exupère...	1770	90

244 TABLE OF THE PROFESSED NUNS.

Entered the Novitiate.	PROFESSED IN QUEBEC.		Deceased.	Age.
1699	43.	Rév. Mère Anne-Marguerite Gauthier de Varenne <i>de</i> <i>la Présentation</i>	1726	42
1702	44.	" " Marie-Anne Davis <i>de</i> <i>St. Benoit</i> *	1749	70
1703	45.	" " Marie Anne Migeon <i>de la Nativité</i> *	1771	86
1703	46.	" " Marie-Geneviève Bau- doin <i>de St. Augustin.</i>	1735	47
1708	47.	" " Marie Anne DuBos <i>de Ste. Madeleine</i>	1734	62
1712	48.	" " Geneviève La Grange <i>de St. Louis</i> *	1776	82
1712	49.	" " Esther-Marie-Joseph Wheelwright, <i>de l'En-</i> <i>fant Jesus</i> *	1780	83
1712	50.	" " Marie Louise Gaillard <i>de la Ste. Vierge.</i> . .	1764	67
1714	51.	" " Louise-Catherine Pin- gnet Vaucours <i>de St.</i> <i>François Xavier</i> * . .	1749	54
1715	52.	" " Marguerite Cloutier <i>de Ste. Monique</i> * . .	1770	70
1715	53.	" " Marie Anne de Bou- cherville <i>de St. Igna-</i> <i>ce</i> *	1772	76
1716	54.	" " Marie Anne Buteau <i>de St. Agnès</i> *	1781	83
1716	55.	" " Françoise Elizabeth Baudouin <i>de Jésus</i> * .	1747	51
1715	56.	" " Angélique Geneviève Normandin <i>de St. Sta-</i> <i>nislus</i>	1727	28

C.	Decase.	Age.
erite		
ne de		
...	1726	42
is de		
...	1749	70
igeon		
...	1771	86
Bau-		
ustin.	1735	47
DuBos		
e	1734	62
range		
...	1776	82
seph		
t'En		
...	1780	83
ailard		
e. ...	1764	67
e Pin-		
de St.		
r*...	1749	54
outier		
* ...	1770	70
Bou-		
Ign-		
...	1772	76
uteau		
...	1781	83
abeth		
us*...	1747	51
evière		
. Sta-		
...	1727	28

Entered the Novitiate.	PROFESSED IN QUEBEC.	Decase.	Age.
1716	57. Rév. Mère Marie-Charlotte de		
	Muy, de <i>Ste. Hélène</i> *	1759	65
1717	58. " " Marie-Catherine de		
	Ramesay de <i>St. Rade-</i>		
	<i>gonde</i>	1725	29
1717	59. " " Marie-Renée Dumes-		
	nil de <i>Ste. Gertrude</i> *	1751	52
1717	60. " " Anne-Louise-Thérèse		
	Juchereau de <i>St. An-</i>		
	<i>toine</i>	1732	33
1717	61. " " Marie Madeleine de		
	Repentigny de <i>Ste.</i>		
	<i>Agathe</i>	1739	44
1717	62. " " Marie-Louise Gaillard		
	de <i>St. Thomas</i> *	1773	71
1717	63. " " Angélique-Françoise		
	Langlois de <i>St. Eliza-</i>		
	<i>beth</i> *	1758	60
1717	64. " " Marie-Agathe LeClaire		
	de <i>Ste. Marguerite</i> *	1759	59
1719	65. " " Angélique Victoire Per-		
	thuis des <i>Anges</i>	1746	45
1719	66. " " Catherine Madeleine		
	des Meloises de <i>St.</i>		
	<i>François de Borgia</i>	1725	28
1719	67. " " Elizabeth-Joseph de		
	Villedonné de <i>Ste. Ge-</i>		
	<i>neviève</i> *	1743	44
1720	68. " " Marie Dorothée Je-		
	ryan de <i>St. Joseph</i> * ..	1759	64
1722	69. " " Félicité Poulin de		
	<i>l'Assomption</i> *	1754	72

246 TABLE OF THE PROFESSED NUNS.

Entered the Novitiate.	PROFESSED IN QUEBEC.	Deceased.	Age.
1723	70. Rév. Mère Marie-Joseph d'Ail- lebonst de Mautet <i>de</i> <i>St. Nicolas</i> *	1749	48
1724	71. " " M. Geneviève Per- thuys <i>de St. Charles</i> *	1761	60
1724	72. " " Marie-Reine Le Page <i>de St. Louis de Gon-</i> <i>zague</i>	1733	31
1728	73. " " Anne-Catherine Petit, <i>de St. Stanislaus de</i> <i>Kotska</i> *	1775	66
1729	74. " " Marie Angélique Ma- riaudeau d'Esglys <i>de</i> <i>St. Eustache</i> *	1751	39
1731	75. " " Marguerite Baudoin <i>de St. Fr. de Borgia</i> *	1757	38
1735	76. " " Louise Lefèvre <i>des</i> <i>Séraphins</i> *	1749	39
1735	77. " " Jeanne Marchand <i>de</i> <i>St. Hyacinthe</i> *	1782	63
1737	78. " " Marie Marguerite Da- vanne <i>de St. Louis de</i> <i>Gonzague</i> *	1802	83
1736	79. " " Marie Elizabeth Ri- chaud <i>de St. Augustin</i> *	1798	53
1737	80. " " Marie-Catherine La- gère <i>de St. Gabriel</i> * ..	1790	82
LAY-SISTERS.			
1642	81. Sister Anne Bataille de St. Lau- rent, <i>Professed in</i> <i>Dieppe.</i>	1669	56

CC.	Decease.	Age.
P'ail-		
et de		
....	1749	48
Per-		
ries *	1761	60
Page		
Gon-		
....	1733	31
Petit,		
us de		
....	1775	66
e Ma-		
lys de		
....	1751	39
audoin		
gia *	1757	38
e des		
....	1749	39
nd de		
....	1782	63
te Da-		
uis de		
....	1802	83
n Ri-		
ustin *	1798	53
La-		
el *..	1790	82
Lan-		
d in		
....	1669	56

Year of ar- rival.	LAY-SISTERS.	Decease,	Age,
1671	82. Sr. Marie Dieu de la Résur- rection, <i>Professed in</i> <i>Paris.</i>	1708	76
PROFESSED IN QUEBEC.			
Entered the Novitiate,			
1647	83. Sr. Catherine Lezeau de Ste. Ursule.....	1684	56
1653	84. " Françoise Ouen de Ste. Madeleine.....	1697	77
1657	85. " Antonette Makinon de St. Marthe.....	1676	47
1657	86. " Anne Dodier de la Pas- sion.....	1710	80
1674	87. " Marie-Madeleine de St. Paul.....	1722	67
1678	88. " Françoise Gravel de St. Anne.....	1699	40
1680	89. " Marie Montmeny de Ste. Cécile *.....	1740	81
1687	90. " Geneviève Gravel de la Visitation.....	1691	23
1691	91. " M. Claude Le Vasseur de de la Visitation *.....	1745	74
1696	92. " M. Louise Huart de Ste. Geneviève.....	1703	37
1696	93. " M. Anne Côté de St. Joa- chim *.....	1740	65
1698	94. " Françoise La Forêt de St. Jean Baptiste *....	1745	67
1700	95. " M. Feuilloteau, de Ste. Anne *.....	1744	63

Entered the Novitiate.	PROFESSED IN QUEBEC.	Deceased.	Age.
1706	96. Sr. Geneviève Le Vasseur de St. Joseph *	1749	76
1709	97. " M. Madeleine Grave de St. Etienne.....	1714	24
1711	98. " Marguerite Gravel de St. Clément *	1762	71
1715	99. " Blanche Maurié de Ste. Thècle *	1746	55
1710	100. " M. Anne Racine de la Résurrection *	1770	71
1719	101. " M. Julienne Maufis de St. André *	1774	73
1722	102. " Marie Gagnon, de St. Paul *	1749	91
1723	103. " Marie-J Patenaude de St. François *	1743	57
1725	104. " Louise Gravel de Ste. Marthe *	1743	40
1725	105. " M. Catherine Constantin, de St. Denis *	1728	21
1735	106. " Geneviève M. Mimaux de la Présentation *	1779	72

	Deceased.	Age.
ur de	1749	76
de	1714	24
e St.	1762	71
Ste.	1746	55
e la	1770	71
le St.	1774	73
St.	1749	91
e St.	1743	57
Ste.	1743	40
ntin.	1728	21
ix de	1779	72

APPENDIX

A

Note for page 25, *supra*.

Madame de la Peltrie's house:—Built in 1643, and bearing irrevocably the name of the noble and pious foundress of the Ursulines, it does not appear to have ever served her as a residence. Rented, at first, to the profit of the Community, it twice sheltered them, when driven from their Convent by fire—1651, 1686.

In 1659, on the arrival in Canada of the first Bishop, Mgr. Fr. Laval de Montmorency, it served as an *episcopal palace*!

A high fence running through the nuns' garden, gave the eminent Prelate a part for his own use, and left the nuns to enjoy their cloister.

Repaired many times, the walls were finally *demolished*, in 1836. The present building, occupying the same site in part, is much larger than the original house, but has no windows on the street. Its ordinary destination has ever been that of a school-house for the free or extern-school.

The bakery and wash-house [*see same page*] stood in the vicinity of the [late] *Old Ash tree*. The wells excavated in old times, of which four are still in good repair, are from 12 to 25 feet in diameter,—in the old *French* style.

B Page 51. *Yet all was not bright, &c.*

During the years 1688—89, the French Colony, more than ever, seemed on the brink of destruction. The Iroquois, stimulated by the English Colonists, profited of every pretext to break peace with the French. The unfortunate policy of the Governor Denonville in capturing and sending several of their chiefs to France, the late success of the French in their expedition against the Senecas, the treachery of Kondiaronk, added fuel to their natural fire, and “like hungry and infuriated wolves they spread themselves along the rivers and borders of the forests, every where ravaging the French settlements.” The English on the other hand, had carried their arms into the country of the Abenakis, and devastated their settlements. Unfortunately for the prosperity of the European colonies on the American continent, their jealousy of each other, and their too great sympathy with their respective mother-countries, kept them at variance,—and the French and English seemed now intent only on each other’s destruction. The Canadians, unable from their small number, to measure strength with their enemies, sought by every means to obtain the alliance of the different Indian tribes.

De Frontenac arrived in an opportune moment for New France. Adopting the most energetic measures, the invasion of the English Colonies was resolved upon, and three different expeditions were

directed against Carlaer [Schenectady], Salmon Falls and Caseo Bay.

These hostilities roused the English to prompt and decided action. Thus was the capture of Quebec planned and undertaken. Its non-success is related in our Text. The simultaneous attack upon Montreal was not more successful.

C

Page 84.

Mr. and Madame Champigny are old friends &c.

Apropos of Madame Champigny, we must relate a little anecdote.

It was in the olden times,—1693. Our nuns had a farm along the banks of the St. Charles, and on some few occasions, the Superioress with her council, had leave, or orders, to go and visit it. On one of these occasions,—it was in August—the nuns, with the required authorization from Bishop Saint-Valier, issued from the cloister at a very early hour, and in their modest vehicle, proceeded to the farm. The morning passed in examining barns, ditches, fences, &c. as they thought best, under the guidance of Rev. Father Raffeix and M. de la Colombière.

An invitation to dine with the good Mothers of the General-Hospital—*Notre Dame des Anges*, could not but be agreeable to all, and doubly so for the three sisters Bourdon, two of whom were among the excursionists. At three o'clock, the company,

in answer to another pressing invitation, are on their way to the Hotel-Dieu, when they meet Madame de Champigny who, trusting her message to no one, has come herself in her carriage to greet the nuns, and secure a call at the Palace as they reenter the city.

The question is embarrassing! It is late. The good nuns of the Hotel-Dieu are waiting: they must adhere to a previous engagement. But Madame de Champigny finds this a poor excuse. Giving orders to her coachman, she retraces her steps, and bids the sentinel *close the gates of the town*. No other entrance remained but through the apartments of the Intendant's Palace. The amiable lady appears at the door in triumph to welcome her guests, whom she has so graciously caught in the snare, and after the most ample demonstrations of politeness and affection, she opens the way and conducts them herself to the Hotel-Dieu. Here, the reception, not less cordial, was more religious. The Hospital nuns were awaiting their visitors in the Church, and welcomed them by singing the *Laudate*. The moments flew so swiftly that evening came on, all unperceived, and the *excursion* was over only at eight o'clock! "We entered our dear Convent, at last, as the dove returned to the ark, weary and in need of rest.

"To tell all the politeness, the cordiality, the

amiable attentions of which we were the object in the two Communities, would be impossible."

See Note continued page 267.

D

Page 123 ;

The voice of grace in her heart, &c.

For the sake of preserving their faith, other captives, besides those who had embraced the religious state, refused the invitations of friends, urging them to return to their native land.

"The daughter of the minister, Eunice Williams, whom no offers of ransom could rescue from the Indian who had taken her as a prize in the raid on Deerfield, became the wife of a Cahnnewaga chief. Long years after, she visited her friends there, arrayed in an Indian dress ; and after a short sojourn, in spite of a day of fast of a whole village, which assembled to pray for deliverance, she returned to the fires of her own wigwam and to the love of her own Mohawk children."—*Bancroft's Hist. U. States.*

In several Indian villages of Lower Canada there are still English names borne by descendants of former captives.

After Miss Wheelwright had pronounced her vows, she gave her family information to that effect, and soon had the satisfaction to know that her worthy parents were not displeased. On the contrary, they sent another messenger with letters and presents for their daughter. Later she received her mother's por-

trait, which is still preserved in the Convent,—as a Madonna.—Among the presents were a silver goblet, marked with the family arms, fine linen, etc. Madame Wheelwright never came to Quebec, but was abundantly consoled for the absence of her daughter by the assurance that she was happy.

E

Page 128.

The martyred Father Rasle, &c.

The Abenakis of Maine had first invited a *Black-robe* among them in 1646. Father Druillettes was sent to them, and his labors, followed by those of the Fathers Bigot—La Chasse,—Loyard,—Aubry of the Society of Jesus, and Thury and Gaulin of the Seminary of Quebec, effected the conversion of the tribe. “For thirty years had Father Sebastian Rasle dwelt in the forest, teaching its wild, red-children the love of God and the devotion to Mary. To the Chapel every night and morning come all the Indian Christians. At morning they make their prayer in common; they assist at Mass, chanting in their own dialect, hymns written for that purpose by their Pastor. When the sun declines westward, and the shadows creep over the village, they seek the Chapel for the public prayer, and to sing a hymn to Mary.

“It was on the feast of St. Bartholomew the Apostle, August 24th, 1754, that a band of Mohawks and English Colonists burst upon the town of

Convent,—as
were a silver
fine linen, etc.
to Quebec, but
absence of her
as happy.

, &c.

invited a *Black-*
Ornillettes was
ed by those of
oyard,—Aubry
and Gaulin of
e conversion of
Father Sebas-
g its wild, red-
e devotion to
and morning
t morning they
assist at Mass,
ns written for
en the sun de-
creep over the
public prayer,

ertholomew the
a band of Mo-
on the town of

Owenagunga [Nowridgewock.] The women and children fled; a few young braves who were in the village, caught up their arms to withstand the enemy. But before they could be slain, the priest, remembering those words of our Lord '*Bonus pastor animam suam dat pro ovibus suis*, The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep,' and knowing himself to be the real object of the attack, advanced to meet his foes. They saw him just as he reached the village cross. A yell of savage exultation, a volley of bullets, and the missionary lay dead at the foot of the symbol of salvation.

Rev. X. D. Mcleod.

F Page 132,—*The Monastery enlarged, &c.*

We place here ample topographical notes for the exclusive benefit of the inmates of the Cloister : a sort of Guide-Book, around our "little world".

The foundations of the first Monastery were laid in 1641; its dimensions were 92 feet by 28, French measure. The Venerable Mother Marie de l'Incarnation with her little Community, entered it on the 21st November, 1642. It was then far from being finished.

The building was three stories high including the attic, and surmounted by a cupola. In the second story was the nuns' dormitory; Our Ven. Mother's

cell being in the centre, directly under the belfry. The kitchen was in the basement story, at the north-west extremity; the Chapel occupied the first story at the other extremity of the building. The parlors were above the chapel. It was through the grate of one of the parlors, occupying the site of the Boarders' new Infirmary (1875), that Our Ven. Mother and several of the nuns found means to escape, on the night of the 31st December 1650-1651, [See Glimpses, Part 1st] when the Convent was destroyed by fire.

The second Monastery was commenced on the same foundations as the first; Madame de la Peltrie laid the first-stone on the 19th May, 1651. Its dimensions—between the walls—in French feet, were 108 by 28, or 112 by 30, English measure.

The nuns began to inhabit it, May 19th, 1652.

The corner-stone of the Church which Madame de la Peltrie built, was laid in great ceremony by the Governor of the Colony, M. de Lauson, on Ascension day, June, 1656.

It was consecrated with the solemn ceremonies of the Church, under the titular invocation of St. Joseph, by Bishop Laval, at the request, and in presence of the Marquis de Tracy, August 17th, 1667. This Church occupied the site of the present parlors, its portal faced (and reached) Donnacona street: there was, also, the handsome Chapel dedicated to St. Anne, erected by the liberality of the

Marquis de Tracy. Brass-headed nails in the floor, along the corridor, show the place of the high Altar : the present door leading into the court-yard, led, then, to the interior sacristy by a passage. In this Church, 1666, *fifty-seven* clergy-men were present, with Bishop Laval, on the occasion of the translation of the relics of St. Felicity and St. Flavian.

All these buildings were covered in slate.

On the 22d June, 1686, the first-stone of the wing, *La Ste. Famille*, 66 feet by 28—[exterior]—was laid by a little Indian-girl, Marie-Rose. The walls were built, up to the second story, when the second conflagration of the Monastery took place, Oct 20th 1686. [See Glimpses page 68.]

The House of Madame de la Peltrie now served as a Convent for the 2d time during 18 months. The Chapel, which had been a stable, stood just near the "Old Ash Tree." The wash-house occupied the site of the present wash-room (*lavoir*).

In restoring the Convent, the first building finished was *La Sainte-Famille* ; which was blessed on the 18th May 1688, and occupied the following day. The pupils had occupied the large hall [Laundry for many years] during the preceding winter. The corner stone of the kitchen (with Infirmary above) was laid by a boarder, Miss Marie-Catherine de Brisay de Denonville, daughter of the Governor, on the 19th July 1686.—Kitchen vaulted, 1698.—The old refectory [now kitchen] first occupied on the 22d June 1688.

The restoration of the main-building,—the walls of which were not destroyed by the fire—was completed during the year 1688, 89.

The Grand Vicar, Mr. Merlae, said the last Mass in the temporary Chapel under the Community-hall, and transported the Blessed Sacrament to the new Chapel (Old Depot) on the 23d June 1689. Here the divine mysteries were celebrated during 35 years. The apartment adjoining (Superior's Room 1854 to 1875) was the nuns' choir ; beneath which was the cemetery during the same space of time : 13 bodies interred there, were transferred to the present cemetery only in 1832.

The translation of the bodies from the ancient choir had taken place in 1724. On that occasion the precious remains of our Venerable Mother were reunited with those of St. Joseph and Madame de la Peltrie, in the lead coffin of the latter. The ancient choir was rebuilt as class rooms in 1689–90 six feet wider ; it was also lengthened, some feet.

In 1712, the Mère des Anges being Superioress, the wing, *la Ste. Famille*, was extended 75 feet, for a Novitiate, wash-room and bakery, cells &c.

In 1715, the wing for parlors, Superior's room, &c., was commenced.

Mother des Anges's plan was to continue the buildings to form a double square, the eastern extremity very near Madame de la Peltrie's house. The large interior court-yard would have been divided by a narrow building — (leaving a porch) for portresses'

room, Depot, room for sewing-girl &c. with a corridor the whole length of the buildings around the interior-court; replacing the *cloister* of European Convents.

In 1716 and 1717, the original plan having been considerably modified, the foundations of the present choir and Church were laid. [see p. 134,5 &c.] The Church was blessed by Bishop Saint-Valier, 14th Aug. 1722. It began to serve regularly March 19th 1723: the interior was completely finished twelve years later, 1735.

The Church measures 100 feet by 45,—interior walls 25 ft. in height: the choir 100 by 36, is but 20 feet high [interior].

The buildings, as completed in 1723, formed a block, exclusive of the church which extended from one angle beyond the square—whole length, if placed on a line,—about 700 feet, not including the Externs, nor the [late] low passage to the choir. The Monastery received no further enlargements till 1834.

C For page 165. *The Chapel of Saints.*

We copy, with pleasure, a description of the Chapel of Saints in the First Convent of the Congregation of Paris. It is easy to see that our little Chapel, although greatly inferior, was modelled on this primitive one.

“Cette Chapelle est un des plus beaux lieux du Monastère, située au dessus de l'Avant-Chœur des

Religieuses. Elle a près de quatre toises de longueur et cinq de largeur. Au milieu du mur (qui a de l'autre côté l'Autel du Chœur) est posé l'Autel de la Chapel. Il est creux en forme d'Armoire afin d'y pouvoir serrer les Reliquaires. Aux deux côtés de l'Autel sont deux formes de pilastres de lambris quarrés, aussi creux pour le même dessein, y ayant au dedans des séparations ornées de riches étoffes à franges d'or, avec des vitres au devant des piliers, d'où l'on peut voir à travers les Saintes Reliques qui y reposent. Deux autres piliers pareils sont aux deux bouts en droite ligne ; si bien qu'il y a en tout quatre piliers dont l'autel est au milieu. Et entre les deux de chaque côté, est une fenêtre qui rend dans le Chœur.

“Le tableau de l'Autel, en figure ronde, est une représentation du Paradis : la Très-Sainte Trinité, la Ste. Vierge, quelques Anges et Apôtres et quelques Saints de chaque ordre y sont très bien dépeints. Outre cela la Chapelle est toute lambrissée et toute peinte. Le bord du tableau, les ornements de l'Autel et les quatre piliers, sont dorés à fond d'azur, avec des têtes de Chérubins dorées. Le lambris de bois qui règne de haut en bas tout autour, est séparé en deux par des peintures diverses ; car le dessus est orné de grands portraits de tous les Patriarches d'Ordre, en leur hauteur, rangés selon le temps qu'ils ont vécus. Et au-dessous sont représentés, en petit volume, les Mystères de la vie de Notre-Seigneur.

" Au plafond paraissent quantité de têtes d'AnGES perçant les nuées, et environnant six globes de lumière, en deux desquels on voit dans un Soleil d'or les sacrés noms de Jésus et Marie, et aux quatre autres, tous les instruments de la Passion de Notre-Seigneur.

" Le jour donne dans ce lieu par deux fenêtres, en entrant à main droite. La Chapelle est fort proprement planchée. Enfin tout y est dans une belle symétrie et avec une agréable décoration. Pour en sortir sont aux deux extrémités, deux petits porches en forme de cabinets peints dedans et dehors; l'un desquels rendait, au commencement, dans la chambre de Communauté et qui depuis a été fermé pour plus grand respect; l'autre situé vis-à-vis a dans le mur à côté gauche, et tout proche de la porte (laquelle donne sur l'escalier qui conduit du dortoir à l'Eglise) une grande table de marbre noir, où est décrite en lettres d'or l'Intention de la pieuse Fondatrice, [Madeleine Luillier, Dame de St. Beuve] en l'érection de cette Chapelle. (1625.) "

Annales manuscrites du Grand Couvent de Paris

These precious Annals of the first half-century of the *Grand Couvent*, form one large Volume of 600 pages, in folio; written by the same hand, and in the same leisurly style as the extract given above. Some account of the destruction of that Convent during the reign of terror; will be given—God willing—in a future volume of the Glimpses.

HFor page 169, *Ex-votos*.

A series of articles on *Ex-Votos*, written by Miss Rose Howe, and published in Vol. XI. of the *Arc Maria*, are highly suggestive for us, American readers. [The full heading is: NOTRE DAME DE FOURTIERES]. The Signore Canonico Palmieri, at Genoa, explains how to *make a Sanctuary*.

"This, says the Doctor, is generally the origin of a Sanctuary [in Europe];—some one prays before a certain altar, and feels that he receives from Heaven that for which he begs, so he sends in gratitude an *ex-voto*: another seeing it there, does likewise; others follow their example. Eventually there springs up in the heart of the people a confidence in prayer offered at that altar; *ex-votos* increase, and in time it becomes a venerated Sanctuary."

Further on she explains the *ex-voto*; "An *ex-voto* is simply a standing thanksgiving for any grace obtained, any peril escaped, or petition granted." She gives the form of the most common in France: "Wooden tablets in neat gilt frames, containing a concise narrative [of favors] in letters of gold on a blue ground. Marble tablets,—six by eight inches, quadrangular, oval or square; these are imbedded in the walls; the letters cut in, gilded, or black. In Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, in Paris, the lime walls are entirely superseded by these marble records of the compassion of the 'Refuge of Sinners'

the 'Comfortress of the Afflicted.' *Ex-votos may be the work of our own hands*:—little basins embroidered,—letters worked on card-board (Mary has helped. Thanks to the Sacred Heart,—Joseph has heard my prayer &c.) Inscriptions in letters of gold-colored cloth, or scarlet or blue satin, *moire-antique*; painting on Bristol board with an inscription, *Ave Refugium Peccatorum &c.*"

I

Page 182.

Course of Studies in the First Convent. Paris.

The study of Latin, without being specified as forming part of the course, was so successfully pursued by some of the nuns, that not only could they read with ease the Psalms, and the Homilies of the Fathers which form the office of the Breviary, but some could even write in that language. We have noticed in the obituaries of our nuns, that expressing their sentiments of piety in their last moments, they made use of the Latin in citing the words of the Psalmist, or of other parts of the Holy Scriptures. Our Ven. Mother was as familiar with Latin as with French; yet, in her case, her science was rather infused than acquired. It was chiefly by translating, and studying translations that the nuns appear to have gained their knowledge of the language of the Church, so useful, especially to those who, every day, include in their devotions the recitation of the Divine office.

We may add that the knowledge of Latin, was in those times common among well-informed females, if compared to the present century.

J

Page 184.

Canada was more fortunate &c.

The following extract from the "Titles and Documents relating to the Seigniorial Tenure" in Canada, shows with what truly Christian intentions the settlements of the French in America were undertaken. The regiment of Carignan, so often referred to in the history of Canada is designated particularly in this act: its name in Canada, is equivalent to a title of nobility.

"The Sieur de....

"JEAN TALON, one of the King's Councillors of State and Privy Councillors, Intendant of Justice, Police, and Finances in New France, the Island of New-foundland, Acadia, and other countries of New France.

"To all who these present letters shall see, greeting:—

"His Majesty having at all times sought with care, and the zeal suitable to his just title of eldest son of the Church, the means of making known in the most unknown countries, by the propagation of the Faith and the diffusion of the Gospel, the glory of God, and the Christian name, *first and principal*

object of the establishment of the French Colony in Canada, and accessorially of making known to the parts of the Earth remotest from intercourse with civilized men, the greatness of his name and the power of his arms, and having judged that there were no surer means to that effect, than to compose this Colony of men fit by their personal qualities to fill it up, to extend it by their labor and application to agriculture, and maintain it by a vigorous defence against the insults and attacks to which it might hereafter be exposed, has sent to this country a number of his faithful subjects, officers of his troops in the regiment of Carignan, and others, most of them agreeably to the great and *pious designs* of His Majesty, being willing to connect themselves with country by forming therein settlements and seigniories of an extent proportionate to their means, and the Sieur N.....having petitioned us to grant him a portion of land :

“We, in consideration of the good, useful and praiseworthy services, grant and concede to the said Sieur &c.

K Page 184.—*Terms for board, &c.*

When the little Indian girls, for whom Madame de la Peltrie had left funds, ceased to come to the Convent (after 1725) the donations applied to the education of young persons in indigent circumstances, particularly those who had become poor through

accident or misfortunes. These funds, placed in France, were lost during the French Revolution, and never recovered.

In justice to the French government while it ruled Canada, we should state that all the educational establishments in the country received (after 1666) a certain subsidy, to be applied to the purposes of education.

L Page 218. *This act, first made in the Great Convent, Paris, in 1638, &c.*

We transcribe from the original :

Cette année, au même temps que le roi très-chrétien Louis XIII, poussé d'une dévotion spéciale envers Notre-Dame, mit sa personne et son royaume, sous sa protection ; la Mère Beron de Ste. Madeleine eut une forte inspiration de prendre la même Notre-Dame pour première et principale Supérieure de ce grand Couvent, lui remettant la charge, et tout l'état spirituel et temporel entre les mains, pour relever désormais d'elle. Ses Religieuses y ayant très volontiers consenti, s'assemblèrent pour cet effet en leur Chapelle des Saints., au sortir de la Haute Messe, où elles avaient communie, le premier Dimanche d'Octobre fête du Rosaire, qui échoit cette année le troisième du même mois. Là fut chanté le Veni Créator, et un Salut à la Ste. Vierge, après quoi la Supérieure à genoux devant son Image en relief tenant le petit Jésus, mit la clef de la

porte Conventuelle à ses pieds, puis prononça à haute voix l'offrande d'elle et de la maison à cette Ste. Mère de Dieu, selon que la ferveur lui suggérait, l'accompagnant de larmes de tendresse aussi bien que toutes ses filles, lesquelles demandèrent après, la bénédiction à leur principale Mère et Supérieure, et chantèrent en action de grâce un Laudato Dominum omnes gentes.

Cette solennelle action se renouvela chaque année à pareil jour, suivant la formule qui en a été dressée. Et le Supérieur avec Chapitre consentant à sa continuation de trois en trois ans, où encore, quelque jour plus commode après l'Élection de la Supérieure. Les Religieuses en la même Chapelle des Saints allaient toutes en leur rang rendre leurs hommages et reconnaissances à la très Ste. Vierge, chantant pendant cette Cérémonie le Te Deum Laudamus. A l'impression des Règlements de l'Ordre, on y inséra ces deux pratiques, pour être observées par tous les Monastères de la Congrégation de Paris.

Manuscript Annals of Paris.

M Page 84. [*Note C continued.*]

Some of our youthful readers, inhabiting Quebec may naturally enquire where the Intendant's Palace was situated. An extract from the "*Rues de Québec*", a recent pamphlet due to the indefatigable and erudite pen of J. M. Lemoine, Esq., will give the desired information :

"L'Intendant De Meulles, vers 1684, dota la pointe est du quartier [Saint-Roch] d'un édifice remarquable par ses dimensions, sa magnificence, ses jardins ornés, le Palais de l'Intendant. Où Talon avait laissé une brasserie en décadence et près de dix-sept arpents de terre non occupés, Louis XIV, sur l'avis de son intendant De Meulles, prodigua de vastes sommes pour y ériger un palais fastueux, où la justice française se rendait, où plus tard, sous Bigot, elle se vendait. . . . Près du site de l'ancien palais, s'élève maintenant la brasserie de M. Boswell."

The palace, situated so commodiously on the banks of the St. Charles, at a short distance from the Upper Town, was left in ruins by the war of the American invasion, in 1775-1776, under Arnold.



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CONTENTS.

(VOL. II.)

—

CHAPTER I.

THE MONASTERY AGAIN.

The work of Mother Mary of the Incarnation continued, *p.* 3.—Statistics, 5.—A hallowed anniversary, 6.—The pupils, 7.—Election of a Superior, 9.

CHAPTER II.

A MEMORABLE DATE.

Laying the first-stone of *La Sainte Famille*, *p.* 13.—Death and burial of Agnes Weskwe, 15.—October, aspect of the Monastery, 19.—The alarm, 22.—“All is lost,” 23.—Three of the spectators, 26.—How the Nuns bear the trial, 27.

CHAPTER III.

RESTORATION OF THE MONASTERY.

The Ursulines at the Hotel-Dieu, *p.* 28.—The feast of St. Ursula, 30.—Incidents, 31.—A little Convent, 34.—Friends in adversity, 35.—The winter and spring pass, 37.—Classes, 37.—Mortal illness of Mother St. Croix, 38.—Fervor, 40.—The restoration completed, 43.

CHAPTER IV.

CLOSE OF THE FIRST HALF-CENTURY.

Coincidence of the restoration, *p.* 44.—Vocations, 45.—A new chapel, 48.—Guardians of the Monas-

tery, 50.—The country on the brink of ruin, 51.—Preparations for war, 52.

CHAPTER V.

THE ALARMS OF WAR.

Contrast of the present with the past, *p.* 55.—The Annals furnish the recital of the Siege, 57.—Our Lady of Victory, 62.—How the Nuns keep a festival, 63.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SECOND SUPERIORESS OF THE MONASTERY.

Rev. Mother Margaret de Flecelles of St. Athanasius, *p.* 66.—Her youth, 67.—Her vocation to Canada, 69.—Mother St. Clare, 70.—“*Our most honored and beloved Mother*” described by the Annals, 73.—The Constitutions of Paris adopted, 78.

CHAPTER VII.

FOUNDATION OF THE URSULINES OF THREE RIVERS.

Educational Institutions in Canada, *p.* 79.—Project of Bishop Saint-Valier, 81.—Consultations and journeys, 82.—Prosperity of the new Convent, 86.—Trials of a later day, 88.

CHAPTER VIII.

FEAST OF THE SACRED HEART ESTABLISHED.

Origin of the Feast of the Sacred Heart, *p.* 90.—The devotion already known in the Monastery, 91.—Establishment of the Feast, 94.—The first shrine, 95.—The Association, 97.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAST SURVIVOR OF 1639.

Biographical Notice of Mother Charlotte Barré of St. Ignatius, *p.* 100.—Early piety, generosity, 101.—Her edifying life, 104.—Links in the chain of tradition, 105.

CHAPTER X.

DAWN OF THE 18TH CENTURY.

The Colony visited by famine, sickness and war, *p.* 107.—Maladies in the Convent, 108.—Other epidemics, 110.—Consolations in the midst of trials, 112.

CHAPTER XI.

THE THREE CAPTIVES.

Allusion to early times, *p.* 115.—The family Wheelwright, 116.—Esther among the Indians, 117.—The Black-robe, 118.—The Captive rescued, 120.—She enters the Convent, 121.—Takes the veil, 123.—Is admitted to profession, 124.—Two other Captives, 125.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MONASTERY ENLARGED.

The Nuns note the signs of the times, and resolve to build, *p.* 132.—Their ardor, 135.—Their Church completed, (1723) 137.

CHAPTER XIII.

QUEBEC IN 1720 : THE NOVITIATE OF THE URSULINES.

Charlevoix's picture of life and manners, *p.* 139.—Our Novitiate at the same date, 141.—The novices introduced : Miss Wheelwright, 142.—Miss de Muy, Miss de Boucherville and Miss de Ramesay, 143.—Miss des Meloises, 146.—The Misses Gaillard and other novices, 151.—More young ladies from Montreal, 152.—and from the environs of Quebec, 154.—Thoughts on the Religious life, 155.—Recreations, 159.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHAPEL OF SAINTS.

Description of the Chapel, *p.* 162.—The relics, 163.—Other sacred objects, 166.—Ex-Votos, 169.—

The Votive Lamp, 170.—The donor, Miss de Repentigny, 172.

CHAPTER XV.

EDUCATION IN THE CONVENT.

The relation of pupil and Convent *Mother*, p. 178.—*Local Government*, 179.—Course of studies, 182.—Zeal for education, 183.—The Day-School, 185.—Effects of religious teaching, 188.—Specimen of names on old lists; Miss Fezeret, 190.—The Misses de Ramesay, 195.—The Misses Begon and their schoolmates, 196.

CHAPTER XVI.

ANCIENT SUPERIORS.

Number of Superiors in 200 years, p. 199.—Rev. Mother Drouet of Jesus, 202.—Rev. Mothers St. Agnes and St. Joseph, 203.—Rev. Mother Le Maire des Anges, 206.—Rev. Mothers St. John and St. Teresa, 209.—Our Perpetual Superioress, 215.—Act of consecration, 217.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY.

Celebration of religious festivals, p. 221.—Preparations for the Centennial, 222.—The *Triduum*, 224.—The Indians, 227.—An Inscription, 228.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE 2D MOTHERS MARY OF THE INCARNATION AND ST. CROIX.

Statistics of the Community, coincidences, p. 230.—Mother Cath. Pinguet of the Incarnation, her youth, 232.—Her life in the cloister, 233.—Testimony the Annals render to Mother Dailleboust of St. Croix, 236.

Table of the Professed Nuns from 1639 to 1739, p. 241.

APPENDIX.

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS, p. 249.

or, Miss de Repen-

CONVENT.

ent *Mother*, p. 178.
rse of studies, 182.
Day-School, 185.—
88.—Specimen of
190.—The Misses
Begon and their

I.

RS.

ears, p. 199.—Rev.
—Rev. Mothers St.
. Mother Le Maire
t. John and St. Te-
oress, 215.—Act of

II.

VERSARY.

als, p. 221.—Prepa-
2.—The *Triduum*,
scription, 228.

III.

E INCARNATION AND

oincidences, p. 230.
e Incarnation, her
ster, 233.—Testimo-
e Dailleboust of St.

om 1639 to 1739, p.

s, p. 249.